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THE CODEX ARABICUS OF MT. SINAI

THE DISCOVERY of the Codex Arabicus was the crowning feature in the story of the Mount Sinai Expedition sponsored by the Library of Congress and the University of Alexandria for the microfilming of the priceless collection of manuscripts preserved in the ancient Monastery of St. Catherine. Numbering over 5,000 codices and scrolls, this collection embraces twelve languages: Greek, Arabic, Syriac, Georgian, Slavonic, Polish, Latin, Coptic, Ethiopic, Armenian, Turkish and Persian.

Amidst this treasure trove, one moved fast from treasure to treasure, not knowing what was to follow next. Exactly twenty-four hours before I had decided to leave the Monastery in the month of June 1950 after the completion of my task with the Expedition, I was in the course of examining Codex No. 514 when suddenly I began to notice some unusual peculiarities on some of its folios. This manuscript is probably the oldest in the Arabic collection, written in Kufic on brittle parchment which I dated late eighth or early ninth century. From the beginning, I had known it to be a Syriac Palimpsest, that is, a manuscript where one scribe erased an older text to write a new one in its place. This was dictated by the circumstances of the shortage of parchment in those days, and scribes generally chose older books, the value of which they did not know. However, on subjecting this Codex to close examination, I found that it was not merely a Syriac Palimpsest. It was much more. On the recto side of folio 47, I observed the existence of Greek uncials running through the page into the margins; and on the verso side of the same folio, a much faded archaic Kufic also could be seen to run into the margins, while Syriac could just be perceived from a different angle across the folio. This gave me the clue to the extraordinary nature of this strange Codex. It is tri-lingual since it contains Syriac, Greek and Arabic layers of writing. Other folios where the eighth-ninth century scribe failed to erase the original Syriac script sufficiently for re-using the parchment were left blank and showed two layers of Syriac super-imposed on one another (cf. folio 9 in particular). Hence the parchment of this Palimpsest must have been used and re-used five times as shown by the existence of five

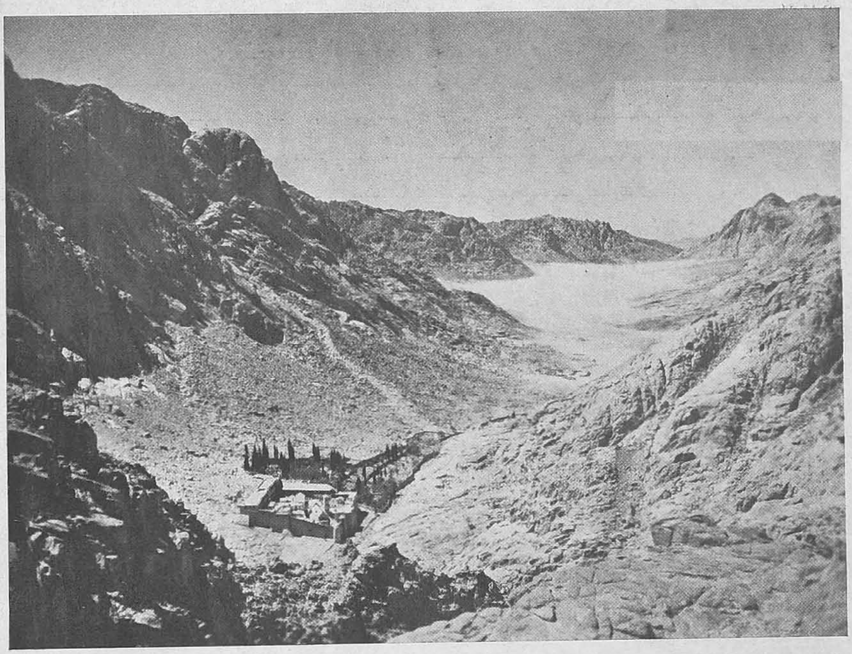
layers of writing on its folios. These are one Greek, two Syriac, and two Arabic layers—a record hitherto unknown in the world of manuscripts and the history of Palimpsests.

A new treasure was thus found to crown our Expedition. There remains, however, a vital question to be answered. Is the value of this "CODEX ARABICUS"—for this is the name which I gave to it—confined to its being a mere object of archaeological interest as a tri-lingual quintuple Palimpsest? My answer is definitely in the negative, for since the Expedition, I consulted several noted New Testament scholars and Syriologists of many countries on these various texts. I should like to sum up the results of my enquiry in order to give the reader the right impression about the contents of the various super-imposed scripts. Let us consider them in succession from the top downwards.

The top layer is in perfect condition and was probably written by a contemporary of the Age of Charlemagne in the High Middle Ages, so ancient to us yet so modern in comparison with the lower texts. It contains interesting new material on some lives of saints and early martyrdoms together with what may be the most ancient Arabic translation of the Book of Job. Next comes an older Kufic text, very difficult to determine, but possibly the earliest Arabic translation of a Gospel in the first century of the *Hijra, i.e.,* seventh-eighth century A.D. The third layer is a Greek Lectionary of St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians, evidently of the late sixth or early seventh century A.D. with some minor variants from Greek texts extant. Finally the Syriac is the oldest and most important. So far, portions of the Gospels of St. Matthew, St. John and St. Mark have been identified and they present several characteristics of great antiquity. The Gospel of St. Mark in particular includes a considerable number of variants of great importance from the fifth century Peshitto text and is believed to be the most ancient Syriac text in existence. It may be coterminous with the fourth century Greek Codex Sinaiticus or even earlier. If so, this text will bring us to the nearest version of the Gospels to the Age of Christ and the Disciples.

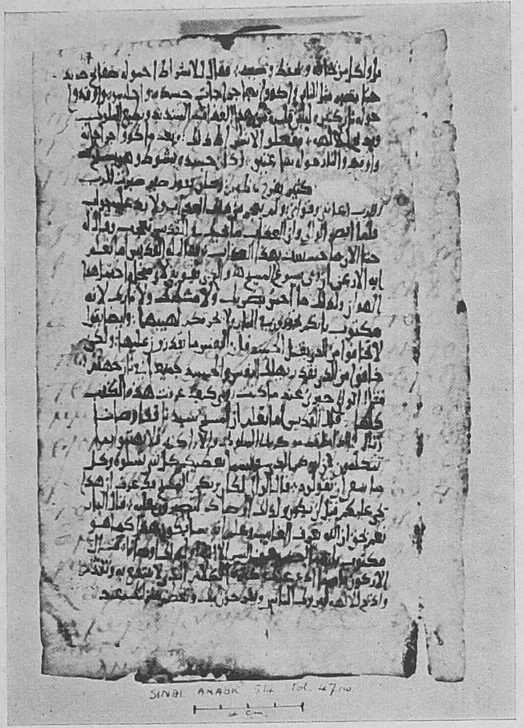
The Library of Congress is considering the possibility of experimenting on it with infra-red and ultra-violet photography in order to separate these multiple layers of writing. Whether the results will realize all our expectations or not, the "CODEX ARABICUS" has been added to the heritage of the great Fathers and of primitive Christianity, and the microfilms of Mt. Sinai will be remembered from generation to generation as one of the happier features in the Age of the Atomic Bomb.

A. S. Atiya

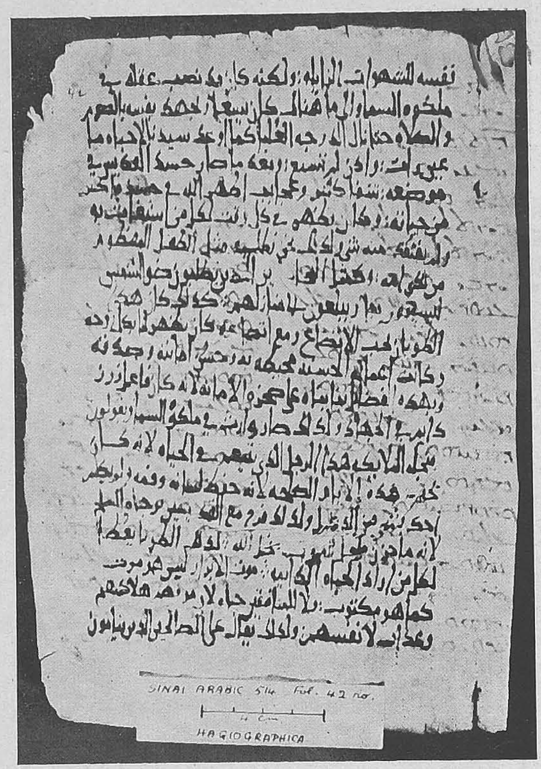


General view of the St. Catherine Monastery and the Holy Valley.

Codex Arabicus showing Arabic Palimpsest.



Codex Arabicus showing Greek Palimpsest.



Codex Arabicus showing Syriac Palimpsest.

MEDIAEVAL HINDU ARCHIVES

WHEN THE term archives is used to-day, it is essentially with reference to documents written on paper. But paper was introduced in India only in the thirteenth century. And when it did make its appearance it was in the north-western parts of the country that its use became known, although in some parts of north Gujarat evidence has been found of manuscripts having been written on paper that could be assigned to the thirteenth century. The existence of these manuscripts, which were essentially religious in character, in the libraries of north Gujarat does not, however, prove that paper was used by administrators for public purposes until about the end of the seventeenth century when its use became common in western India. From about the seventh century A.D. till almost the end of the seventeenth century, it was not paper but stone and copper which were used for writing documents. Since these stone and copper inscriptions were used as public documents arising in the ordinary course of business, but put away for future reference, they were essentially archives in the modern sense of the term.

Western India abounds in thousands of these documents, particularly those inscribed on stone, which are of inestimable value to students of history. They were called *śāsana,* meaning in Sanskrit, *śās*=to command or to proclaim, and signifying a royal grant, charter or edict. When the command or edict was engraved on stone (*śilā*), it was called *śilā śāsana,* and that engraved on copper (*tāmra*), *tāmra-śāsana.* Of these the former are more numerous than the latter which, being portable, were meant more for private custody. The stone inscriptions, however, were set up in public places for general information. Sometimes a stone inscription was a counterpart of a copper inscription, but most often, the former were themselves original documents.

Before we proceed to describe the stone inscriptions in detail, it is necessary to distinguish them from documents which were public, but which did not arise out of ordinary business, and were not meant for future reference, being designed only to commemorate certain events. These documents were epitaphs of two kinds—the hero stones and the memorial stones. The former, called *vīra kal,* commemorated the death of heroes; the latter, the death of women who burnt themselves along with their deceased husbands, according to the rule of *sahagamana.* Although in some instances, these two types of records contain literary details, yet they are not of any importance for our purpose.

We may now proceed to describe the stone inscriptions. They

present the aspect of an unbroken expanse of writing, surrounded by a few sculptured images. The archives are without any interval or gap from top to bottom, the engraving being rude and rough or skilful and regular according to the period and the ability of the sculptor. The most ancient archives are in large and deliberately deep-cut letters, on massive and ponderous slabs, "seeming as if the work of giant hands". In the earlier period, the letters are large and less artistic; but they become smaller and more artistic as we reach the eleventh century of the Christian era. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the calligraphy becomes a perfect work of art, the documents being inscribed "on beautifully polished slabs of black hornblende, in regular and ornamental characters, varied in design to suit their position; and the whole so well designed and fitted together, that no space is left where a single additional letter could be inserted". But from the end of the thirteenth century, the engraving deteriorates, until we reach the end of the seventeenth century, which marked the downfall of the great Empire of Vijayanagara, when the characters were often inartistically inscribed and on indifferent materials, any kind of stone being used for the purpose. The opening of the eighteenth century saw the stone inscriptions giving place to paper documents which were called after the north Indian (Persian) model, *sanads*.

The stone archives varied in size. Some were 3 feet 3 inches by 1 foot 6 inches; others, 4 feet by 1 foot 11 inches; others, 7 feet 7 inches by 2 feet 11 inches; and still others, 11 feet 2 inches by 3 feet 7 inches, the size of the stone depending on the information that was to be inscribed on it.

The stone archives may be divided into six parts—the first dealing with sculptures and verses; the second, with the details of the royal donor; the third, with the details of the feudatories; the fourth, with the date; the fifth, with the details of the gift; and the sixth, with warnings against the destruction or violation of the gift. The sculptured images at the top are more noticeable in later records, when sectarianism arose in the country. It was here that the followers of Śiva, Viṣṇu, and Jaina distinguished themselves. If the donor was a Śaivite, the *liṅga* or symbol of Śiva with a priest was engraved; if he was a Vaisnavite, there was the figure of Garuda or the kite; and if he was a Jaina, the figure of a Tirthakara was inscribed. In all cases, the figures of sun and moon were inscribed, as being symbols of two great witnesses of all treaties and human transactions, and as emblematic of the perpetuity of the gifts. These figures are in relief within the rounded or arched top of the stone document, followed by an invocation, usually in Sanskrit verse. The verse varied in the case of the three sects: Śaiva, Vaiṣṇava and Jaina. If the

donor was a Śaivite, the adoration was to Śambhu (Śiva); if the donor was a Vaisnavite, the adoration was to Viṣṇu in the shape of the Boar; and if the donor was a Jaina, the adoration was to the doctrine of *syādvāda* of Tailokyanātha.

The second part of the document was devoted to the details of the reigning monarch, his titles (in full) which were in prose, his progenitors, and an account of his prowess, his conquests, and his kingdom. It is interesting to note that the character of the sovereign's reign is represented as one of Arcadian simplicity, for he is always stated to be ruling in the enjoyment of security and good conversation (*sukha-sankathā-vinodim*).

The third part of the stone archive is made up of an account of the family and pretensions of the great feudatory or nobleman or administrator or general ruling over the province in which lay the land which was the subject of the endowment, followed by similar statements regarding the donor. These statements, which appear to a modern reader as hyperbolic and excessively magnified, were perhaps inevitable in an age when social distinctions were very clearly marked, and the duties and rights of the various sections still dictated by the *Dharma Śāstras*. It was not uncommon for a feudatory to assume the name of king (*rāja* or *arasu*). This practice may be compared to that found in the charters of the Saxon Kings of England, where men of royal blood laid pretensions to the title of Rex.

The fourth part of the stone archive dealt with the date of the gift. This was given with great minuteness, mention being made of the cycle year, the month, the lunar date, the week day, and any astrological or astronomical conjunction or phenomenon like an eclipse, an equinox, etc. These details were usually referred to a known era like the Śālivāhana śaka, although in some instances, the reference was also made to a Cālukya-Vikram era, and in still others, to eras of obscurer monarchs. Many documents contain the precise date concealed in a phrase, which is capable of various interpretations, and which could be determined only from the context. Sometimes, the dates were concealed in letters of the alphabet; and on other occasions, the figures on the dates were to be read backwards. Novel as these methods may appear to modern students of history, yet they give us an idea of the average intellectual standards of the age. When we remember that all these stone archives were fixed in the ground, most often in public places, along highways, or in temple precincts, or the courtyards of palaces, buildings, etc., where all and sundry could read them; that, except in very few instances, the contents of these stone documents were not copied *verbatim* in copper plate documents; and that they required a good deal of skill to read, we cannot help

concluding that the people of those times were sufficiently well acquainted with rules of Sanskrit and Kannada grammar, and with the details of astronomy without which the enigma of the dates, in most cases, could not be deciphered.

The four parts of stone archives we have described above were mostly in Sanskrit. But the fifth was invariably in the language of the country, Kannaḍa, most often of the archaic type called Haḷe Kannaḍa. The gift is described in Haḷe Kannaḍa in great detail, with the boundaries of the land given in full. The transfer of the gift was made with the traditional ceremony of pouring water—a practice which was common till the other day in closing an agreement or a sale deed. The person who signed the proprietory right poured a little water on to the hands of the purchaser in token of his entire renunciation of all claim. Sometimes a coin was presented by the donor at the same time. The gift of land thus given was bestowed in perpetuity and rent free, and also free from all burdens and assignments of all present and future profit which it might yield. These rights were usually termed the Eight Rights of Possession (*aṣṭa-bhoja-teja-svāmya*).

The sixth and final part of a stone archive was made up of quotations in Sanskrit or in Haḷe Kannaḍa, denouncing the crime of revoking or alienating in any way the gift of land made either to temples or to priests and preserving works of merit. The commonest wording was to this effect—"whoso usurps a gift made by himself or by another, shall assuredly be born a worm in ordure for sixty thousand years". This last part of the document stamps them as records which were meant for future reference. The seventeenth century records amply justify the nature of the records. The stone archives contain at the head the words *nirūpa prati,* copy of the order, followed by the date and the royal signature, and at the end are the words *nerūpa band,* the order ends. The court official was charged to see to its execution, and to have it entered in the *senabova kaḍita* (that is, the revenue register of the village accountant). Finally, the fact that these documents were inscribed on stone, bespeak their nature which was one of permanent future reference. That thousands of these stone archives should have come down to us intact from the early centuries of the Christian era, proves that there was a peculiar civic sense among the people, which made them preserve these documents for posterity.

These extraordinary stone archives came to be inscribed in the following manner. The Royal Secretary communicated the King's order to the Chief Secretary. The latter on approval, transmitted them to the revenue officers. There then assembled the Revenue Accountants, who

made entries accordingly in their revenue registers. The literary expression was the *extempore* performance of the poet, who was in state employ, and who was on the spot, while the actual engraving was the work of the stone mason. In some instances, the stone masons were themselves learned poets.

We may conclude our brief survey of the mediaeval Hindu archives by mentioning some details of public administration, which they embodied. In addition to those dealing with the rulers, feudatories, dates and donees, there were very many important details in the documents which are of the greatest historical value. The administrative officials, their designations and duties ; details of the assessment of lands ; the revenue yield of the province ; the burden of taxation ; the judicial procedure ; famine conditions ; municipal affairs ; details about education, water supply, and rural administration ; condition of society, religion and commerce—these are a few of the major subjects which are dealt with in these unique records of mediaeval Hindu India, which form the anchor-sheet of our study for about 1,000 years, from the seventh till the seventeenth century A.D.

B. A. SALETORE

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NOTES ON THE CLASSIFICATION, ARRANGEMENT AND CATALOGUING OF A LARGE MAP COLLECTION

THE FOLLOWING notes outline some of the problems encountered in the organisation of a large map collection and various ways employed in overcoming them. They are based on a knowledge of the working of the Royal Geographical Society's Map Room, with assistance from the staff, and on information supplied by the curators of other collections. I have set out, first, general considerations and then noted any modifications which have been met with. In starting a map collection *de novo*, consideration should of course be given to the purpose of the collection, and the type of users to be catered for; the accommodation available may also require the general scheme to be modified.

The first and essential step is to decide upon a *scheme of classification*. The purpose of classification is to provide a definite place in the map files for every map received. The appropriate reference number obtained from the classification is given to every map on receipt, and the maps are filed away under these numbers. The second object of the classification is to bring associated maps together in the files as far as possible. This assists those who are working, *e.g.* on a particular area, but to make proper use of the collection, students, for reasons noted below, must consult the catalogue.

The most satisfactory classification is based upon the special characteristic of cartographic material, namely that every item can be referred to a particular area, from a globe to a large scale map of a town: "the area may for maps be considered as the most obvious and significant characteristic by which to classify them".

The preparation of a classification therefore resolves itself in designing a scheme which will allow any area to be allotted a definite place in it. To allow for the growth of the collection it should be capable also of sub-division as required.

The following example is taken from the Directorate of Military Survey Scheme, in which letters and numbers are used to indicate the classification:

A. The Universe (if astronomical charts are to be included).

B. The World.

C. etc. The Continents, Europe, etc.

J. etc. The Oceans.

M., N. The Polar Regions.

In this scheme, for example, all maps of Europe or any part of it,

have 'C' as the first element of the class number. These main classes require sub-division: 'B' for example, is divided into B.1 Northern Hemisphere: B.2 Southern Hemisphere, etc. The Continents also require sub-divisions to include large areas, *e.g.* C.1. Northern Europe; afterwards the countries arranged alphabetically form the sub-divisions, and they can in turn be further sub-divided, *e.g.* C.4:1 Northern France. It is unnecessary to go into further details here; the principal points to be remembered are that provision for areas larger than countries and often ill-defined should be made, and that sub-division is possible if required.

Based on the classification adopted, a *hand list* should be maintained, in which each map is entered in its appropriate place as received. The hand list is important as from it is obtained the sequence number of each map, which gives the position of the individual map in the files; *e.g.* if the class mark is C.4.1. (5), the (5) signifies that this is the fifth map, in order of receipt, of Northern France.

In planning the arrangement of a collection, the map files or cases will be arranged to accord with the classification scheme so that the maps can readily be located. Consideration must be given at this point to the probable character of the collection, *e.g.* will it concentrate more heavily on one particular region, and what is its likely rate of growth? Adequate provision may then be made for the future.

So far, it has been assumed that all the cartographic material has been classified in one system and arranged in strict accordance with it. This is theoretically sound, but in practice difficulties arise, mainly from the varied character of the material. Maps themselves offer no great difficulties; it is advisable to avoid folding them, or cutting and mounting in sections. Atlases or guide books containing maps are of course best shelved as books, for it would be inconvenient to say the least to put them in their logical place according to their classification. In collections in which one classification is carried throughout, it is usual to add some sign to the class mark to indicate the particular format, and to place the atlases on shelves near their logical position in the collection. Globes, wall maps (which are most conveniently dealt with by rolling and stacking on horizontal shelves), relief models, etc., can be treated similarly. However, once even this small departure from strict arrangement has been made, I consider very little is lost if the atlases, etc. are brought together on shelves, and classified and arranged on a system parallel to that used for the general collection, but taking account of variations in size. Atlases in constant use, however, are better kept flat, on top of the cases, as this minimizes wear and tear on the bindings. Broadly speaking, atlases are used for different purposes than medium

or large scale maps. General atlases are required mostly for rapid location of places, for which they are in frequent use. The maps are required generally for more detailed study of areas, though they may be consulted to locate places not found in the atlases. It will therefore be found more useful to group atlases together, with gazetteers and similar material, preferably in the catalogue room.

One or two further points should be made with reference to arrangement. Uniform series of topographical maps, *e.g.* the one-inch sheets of the Ordnance Survey or the quarter-inch series of the Survey of India, should clearly be kept together in the order of their sheet numbers, and not classed sheet by sheet: similarly with series covering large areas of the world, such as the International Million map of the world. It is useful to keep with them in the file the relevant index maps, on which the sheets can be marked off as received.

With regard to maps in books, instances occasionally occur where these are removed from the books and placed in the collection. This is a practice much to be deprecated. If extra flat copies cannot be obtained, the volumes should be treated as books, and the maps entered in the map catalogue. Where a map collection is organized in connection with a library, it should be possible to arrange that all important maps in books are noted and included in the map catalogue.

Maps are generally filed in cases with horizontal drawers, but for series with large numbers of sheets vertical files and stiff folders are most convenient. The serial numbers can be seen more easily and the required sheet removed without disturbing a large pile of maps. In arranging the cases it is also advisable to restrict the height of some so that maps can be spread out on the tops of cases for reference.

The use of a single classification system for the whole map collection is followed by the Directorate of Military Survey, London, and the procedure is described in detail in E.J.S. Parsons: *Manual of Map Classification and Cataloguing*. Mr. Parsons is now in charge of the Map Room of the Bodleian Library, Oxford, and has introduced the same system there. In the Map Room of the British Museum, sheet maps are classified on an empirical topographical system, similar to the above, which commences with 'World' and is broken down into progressively smaller divisions. The class numbers range from 1 to 99,999. Atlases and volumes of maps are classified separately: in recent years, they have been arranged substantially in order of accession, with provision for volumes of unusual size.

The maps in the R.G.S. Map Room are classified under a very similar topographical scheme, proceeding from larger to smaller areas, countries

being arranged alphabetically under the appropriate continent. Continents and countries have four sub-divisions: *General,* maps of the whole area, further sub-divided by subject; *Divisional,* large portions of the area, frequently designated by compass directions, *e.g.* Northern England, Eastern France, the exact limits of which may vary in day-to-day usage; *District,* precisely defined areas, generally administrative, *e.g.* counties of England and Wales, Departments of France; *Special,* towns, islands, and small areas such as a strip road map between two cities, a canal system, a drainage scheme, which cannot be allotted to a particular *District.* These *District* and *Special* classes may not be defensible on strictly logical grounds, but it has been found after many years' trial that in practice this method does work satisfactorily. A classification notation formed entirely of letters and numbers has not been adopted, as it has been found in practice that it is easier to think in terms of names than of numbers. By this method the map drawers bear the classification in a slightly abbreviated form, *e.g.,* Spain, G. 1-20, rather than, say, C. 38: 1.

A detailed classification scheme is given in the publication by E.J.S. Parsons referred to above: less detailed schemes are in S. W. Boggs and D. C. Lewis: *Classification and Cataloguing of Maps and Atlases* (Washington, D.C.: Dept. of State) and *Manual for the Classification and Cataloguing of Maps* (American Geographical Society).

Cataloguing

For the same reasons as in the case of classification, it is the general practice to place the main entries for maps under the area headings to which they relate. Since a map may be of value from more than one point of view, *e.g.* a boundary map may contain details of human geography, or a geological map may have recent topographical details; additional entries or cross references should be made where appropriate. The arrangement of the entries can take two forms: either (*a*) a systematic topographical order similar to that of the classification, or (*b*) a dictionary form, in which the entries are arranged alphabetically under the names given in the titles of the maps. In the first instance, *e.g.* a map of the Ruhr would be classified in some such way as 'Germany, District. Ruhr' or 'Germany. Western. Ruhr', according to the scheme adopted. In this way, all maps of adjacent areas are brought together in the catalogue. In a dictionary method, the heading would be 'Ruhr'. This certainly brings all the Ruhr maps together, but separates them from entries on related areas. On the whole, the first method is to be preferred, though the dictionary catalogue has the advantage that added entries under the name

of the cartographers can be included alphabetically in the same catalogue.

In addition to the specific area to which it relates, a map may show some particular characteristic, *e.g.* geology, climate, etc. In this case, the area heading can be sub-divided by subject, *e.g.* 'Germany. Western. Ruhr. Geology', or 'Ruhr. Geology'.

Since the scales of maps are one of their most essential characteristics, it is useful to make added entries under the scales, and these can be grouped together following the main area headings.

Following the area heading, each entry should state as a minimum the title, scale, number and size of sheets, place of publication, publishing body or author, and date. Additional details can be added, where these are of importance, such as method of showing relief, projection used, prime meridian, etc.

The British Museum 'Catalogue of Printed Maps' is in alphabetical dictionary form, the main heading giving the area, subject, and date ; *e.g.* 'India. Physical maps. 1950', 'Bengal. General maps. 1941', 'Sahara. Road maps. 1949'.

The Directorate of Military Survey system is a compromise between a dictionary catalogue and a systematic topographical arrangement. Major areas of a continent are placed under the continent, and divisions of a country under the country, the main headings then being arranged alphabetically. The examples given above would have the headings: 'India dist. Bengal', and 'Africa dist. Sahara', the entries being arranged alphabetically, and then by scale, and order of date. Each main area file is followed by a subject file and a scale file.

This comprehensive method has been evolved to meet the requirements of a highly specialized establishment ; for a general map collection a less detailed method is sufficient.

In the R.G.S. map catalogue, the main headings are those used in the classification (*see above* pp. 10-11). Where necessary, these are further subdivided by subject, *e.g.* climate, communications, geology, history, etc. The complete catalogue heading is therefore in the form 'France. Divisional. Geology'. The final arrangement of the entries is chronological, by date of publication. Each catalogue card bears the class reference, by which the map can be located in the collection.

A separate alphabetical index of the names of cartographers, surveyors, etc. is also maintained. This is particularly useful for older maps and for historical research.

From what has been said above, it will be seen that the differences between the topographical cataloguing methods currently in use are not fundamental, but have mainly arisen in practice to meet particular needs.

Given the necessary staff, it is of course possible to multiply the number of added entries and cross-references almost indefinitely.

To sum up the main trend of these comments: in organizing a map collection, it is essential to draw up a *classification system,* upon which the orderly management and efficient use of the collection depends. This should cover as far as possible the whole collection, but in practice it may be found desirable to class some sections, such as atlases, separately. *Hand lists* which are in effect inventories of the maps in the classes are also essential for the administration ; from them are obtained the precise class marks for all maps as they enter the collection. The *catalogue* is of course the key to the whole collection, and should be designed with a view to the likely demands of users. It must include all the cartographical material in the collection, and will therefore prevent any errors which might arise from too implicit reliance on the classification system. It may be of dictionary form or topographically arranged ; I personally am in favour of the latter, since unusual regional or place names may be overlooked when consulting the former. But whatever the system selected, the main thing, as in all cataloguing, is that it should be consistently observed throughout.

G. R. Crone

THE PROBLEM OF ARCHIVAL ESTRAYS

FEW ARCHIVAL problems have in recent times been the subject of so lively a public discussion or occasioned so much patriotic emotion in this country as the problem relating to the class of documents which, in the absence of a more appropriate expression, I have hesitantly chosen to designate 'archival estrays'. The belief that an enormous quantity of Indian historical documents have strayed out of the repositories to which they originally belonged and have in the course of the last two hundred years left the shores of India has steadily been gaining adherents almost since the time when literate India became for the first time alive to the greatness of its dimly known past; and the belief is now almost universally held in this country. It is, therefore, small wonder that one of the first demands to be pressed by the new-born Indian nation on its first popularly elected Government should relate to the extradition from abroad of the invaluable treasures of which, to all seeming, the country has remained deprived for so many years, and to the enactment of laws that would prevent the future flight of archival materials from their legitimate resting places.

The nation's solicitude for what it believes to be its archival estrays is adequately mirrored not only in the lively discussion both in the Press and Parliament, but also in the activities of learned bodies more directly concerned with archival problems and historical studies such as, for instance, the Indian Historical Records Commission and the Indian History Congress.[1] Resolution XIV of the 24th session of the Commission recommended to the Government of India that the books, manuscripts and records in the possession of the India Office should be brought to India and deposited in the National Archives of India.[2] This recommendation was made apparently under the assumption that the archival contents of the India Office were archival estrays from Indian repositories and deserved to be recalled to their place of origin at all cost. Resolution XIII of the same session dealt with a less controversial, though by no means a less intricate issue, *viz.* the concentration at the National Archives repository of all the archival accumulations of the defunct Residencies and Political Agencies which had till 14 August 1947 been under the control of His Excellency the Crown Representative.[3] The Commission rightly feared that unless the Government of India intervened immediately, these

[1] Resolution II passed at the annual business meeting of the Indian History Congress at Nagpur (29 Dec. 1950).

[2] *Progs. of the I.H.R.C.*, XXIV, pp. 162-3.

[3] *Ibid*, p. 162.

accumulations might stray out of India's custody, like many such collections in the past. Equally significant was another recommendation made at the same session which urged Government "to undertake suitable legislation for preventing export or transfer outside of records, historical documents and manuscripts from the Indian Union. . . ."[4] The same anxiety to prevent the flight of archives from their legitimate resting places is reflected in the solution suggested by the Research and Publication Committee of the Commission in 1948 to the problems arising out of the partition of the vast sub-continent. The Committee's recommendations were:

> ". . . it is not in the interest of historical research to divide important series of records between the two States in consequence of the Partition. In any case care should be taken that the integrity of the series remains intact. Should one of the Dominions stand in need of any records in the custody of another, microfilm copies of the original should be supplied and all facilities should be given to *bona fide* scholars from either Dominion." (Resolution VIII, 11th Meeting, 1948).[5]

If our archivists and historians have evinced a keen awareness of the problem of archival estrays by according their moral support to the national demand for making good all our archival losses, neither our legislators nor our rulers have been less responsive to that demand. One of the first steps taken by the national Parliament to meet this demand was the enactment of the Antiquities (Export Control) Act of 1947. That Act not only decreed that no person should export any antiquity except under the authority of a licence granted by the Central Government, but, by widening the definition of antiquities so as to include in their scope any manuscript that had been in existence for one hundred years or more, bade fair to put an effective check on the export of records of all categories, barring only those which were of comparatively recent origin. The inclusion of archives in the Union List[6] of the Constitution of India is a definitive recognition of the principle that India's archival wealth needed legislation on an all-India basis to save them from the risks of dismemberment or dispersal. The readiness with which the Central Government has agreed to examine the possibility of acquiring India Office records is yet another concession to the popular demand.[7] So also is the setting up by it of a body of specialists whose duty would be to compile materials on the

[4] *Ibid* (Resolution IX), p. 159.
[5] *Progs. of the I.H.R.C.*, XXIV, p. 143.
[6] Item 67, Seventh Schedule; *The Constitution of India*, Delhi, 1949, p. 240.
[7] See on this point the reply given by the Prime Minister on 12 Dec. 1947 to a short notice question of Pandit Mukut Bihari Lal Bhargava.

history of India's struggle for freedom. The last step is primarily attributable to a general apprehension that unless steps are taken to get these materials collected immediately they might be lost to the nation for ever.[8]

Instances like these can be multiplied *ad infinitum*. But those cited will suffice to show how acutely sensitive the nation as a whole has of late become to the need for collecting and keeping together every shred of writing that may help to illumine the country's past. Whether our spokesmen talk of obtaining for India the archival accumulations of the India Office, or of filling in the gaps in the extant archival series in the various repositories,[9] whether they propose the seizure of the records of the abolished zemindaries or the defunct States,[10] or the constitution of a central authority that would assume control of the entire archival wealth of the country,[11] public or private, it is this sensitiveness whose compulsive influence seems to be dictating their thought and action.

For a people whose history is believed to have begun five thousand years ago, but whose extant archives cover no more than the last 250 years of its dimly lit past and cover them badly,[12] such a mental attitude would not seem surprising. But whether this attitude can be justified by a more effective argument than those based on political fervour or patriotic emotion is altogether a different problem, the answer to which can be provided only when we have examined carefully the nature and the extent of the problem of archival estrays itself in all its different aspects. It is vital to such an examination, however, that we be clear from the very start as to the exact meaning of the term, for even the pundits are not agreed as to its precise connotation.

What are Archival Estrays?

The problem which faces us is not only that of finding a definition but also that of choosing a nomenclature. With regard to the name we

[8] See item 19 of the Progs. of the Members' Meeting of the I.H.R.C., 29th session. Also *Progs. of the I.H.R.C.*, XXVIII, part I, pp. 114, 186-92.

[9] See the post-war reconstruction programme drawn up by the Research & Publication Committee of the Indian Historical Records Commission in 1945 (*Progs. of the I.H.R.C.*, XXI, iii, pp. 27-34).

[10] cf. Resolutions X & XI of the Research & Publication Committee of the I.H.R.C. passed at its 16th meeting. (*Progs. of the I.H.R.C.*, XXVII, part I, pp. 26-27). Also Resolution IV of the 20th meeting of the R & P Committee (not yet printed).

[11] *Progs. of the I.H.R.C.*, XXVI, part I, pp. 58-59, and XXVII, part I, p. 63 (Resolution VIII).

[12] Of the extant official archives of the pre-British days the most significant example is perhaps the Peshwa Daftar, housed in the Alienation Office, Poona, which dates back to 1719. It is, however, doubtful if the collection in its present state contains the records of the Peshwas in their entirety. See in this connection Sardesai, *A Handbook to the Records in the Alienation Office, Poona*. It is significant that such a distinguished historian as Sir J. N. Sarkar has been loth to credit this collection with a full archival character. (See his report in *Progs. of the I.H.R.C.*, XXIII, p. 124). Of the Imperial Mughal archives we have practically nothing except the few documents of the last three emperors preserved in the National Archives of India with the so-called Mutiny Papers.

have a choice between 'missing documents', the term used in Muller, Feith and Fruin's classical treatise,[13] and the one which appears in the caption of the present study. The first term has certainly the merit of being simple, but it is rather loose in its correct sense, for all 'missing' documents are not necessarily 'estrays' from an archival series. A record which has been destroyed or has perished due to natural ageing or decay is no doubt a missing document, because its absence creates a gap in the series to which it originally belonged, but it would certainly be wrong to place it in the same category with others which have simply wandered away from the series and may still be existing. The mere disappearance of a record from its parent series is no justification for its being regarded as 'lost', for it may have found shelter in a custody other than the rightful one. A record which is definitely known to exist, whatever be its location at a given time, is certainly not a 'missing document'.

Another term in the field is 'fugitive archival material', which occurs in the title of an article contributed by Randolph G. Adams to *The American Archivist*, April, 1939.[14] But the acceptance of the phrase is not without its difficulty, which must be squarely faced before it can be pressed into service. The word 'fugitive' in its attributive use means, according to the *Oxford Dictionary*, 'apt or tending to flee, given to or in the act of running away'. The adoption of the word to qualify archives would expose us to the charge of having illegitimately inferred that certain classes of archives possess an inherent aptitude for running away. But as no such attribute can be imagined of any category of archives, and as none of the essential attributes of an archive would make it naturally tend to go astray, it is doubtful if the term can be suitably applied to it. The word estray, on the other hand, means 'something that has wandered from its normal or proper place', 'something separated from the main body', 'a detached fragment'.[15] Since the idea we have here in mind is that of forcible separation of a part from a whole that idea is likely to be much better conveyed by the word 'estray' than the term 'fugitive'. It is, moreover, significant that the expression 'fugitive archival material' has been used by Adams as a descriptive phrase rather than a nomencla-

[13] *Manual for the Arrangement and Description of Archives* by S. Muller FZ., J. A. Feith and R. Fruin, Th. Az., tr. by Arthur H. Leavitt, 1940, pp. 97-99, 150-51, 154, 159, 215.

[14] Pp. 85-96.

[15] That the word implies both an idea of original ownership and reclaimability will be clear from the following example in Richardson's *Pamela* (I, 432): "This happy estray thus restored, begs leave by me to acknowledge its lovely owners." Compare also the following use by Elisha K. Kane (*Arctic Explorations: Second Grinnell Expedition in search of Sir John Francklin*, 1856, p. 350): "This poor little wanderer was an estray from his fellows." The legal meaning of the word is given by Blackstone in his *Commentary on the Laws of England* (1765): "Any beast may be an estray that is by nature tame and reclaimable." (p. 298).

ture, and the name actually adopted by him in the body of his article is 'Archival Estrays.'

A precise definition has always been the despair of those who have to deal with disciplines other than one or another of the exact sciences, and it is not at all surprising that neither Adams nor any other scholar who has interested himself in the problem of archival estrays has provided us with a definition of the term. Adams appears to have meant by the term both documents that have gone out of an archival repository and those which never formed part of a regular archive series and never consequently reached official custody. Not only did he exclude from the scope of his term the papers which, without leaving their legitimate custody, had yet wandered away from the series to which they originally belonged, but he deliberately offered to include within it even those which can never be regarded as archives according to the strict definition of the term. While much of what Adams says in the course of his very thorough and informative study is illuminating, it is difficult to endorse his objection to the validity of the principle of continuous official custody in determining what archives are, and the interpretation offered by him is both too wide and too narrow to give the term the scientific precision we are seeking. It is too wide because it extends to documents which are non-archival, it is too narrow because it leaves out many which are genuine archives.

This leads us to a consideration of the real meaning of the term 'archives'. It is just possible that the term itself will supply the clue we are seeking. According to its accepted definition the use of the word is strictly limited to those documents which were drawn up and used by an individual or a body in the exercise of their legitimate functions, were kept or intended to be kept by them[16] precisely in the order in which the business these documents reflect was dealt with, and were subsequently preserved for their own information either by them or by their legitimate successors in their own custody, or in that of an officer or a body appointed for the purpose by either. Most noteworthy in this connection is the requirement that the arrangement of archival documents relating to a function should strictly follow the order in which the business they relate to and which brought them into being was disposed of, and no other order. It is this requirement which enables an archival series to retain its characteristics as a living organism, a natural and unconscious growth,

[16] I am aware that by adding the phrase 'intended to be kept' I am slightly deviating from the orthodox definition of Sir Hilary Jenkinson (*A Manual of Archive Administration*, p. 11), but the deviation is no more than verbal. I will refer in this connection to Rule I of Muller, Feith and Fruin (*op. cit.* p. 1), which in so many words, lays emphasis on the idea of intention.

and prevents it from degenerating into an artificial compilation, such as, for instance, can usually be seen in a library or a museum.

Since archival documents come into being as a result of the activities of a body or an individual performing their legitimate functions, and accumulate precisely in the order of the executive or the administrative events to which they owe their origin, and since the order of these events can be neither anticipated nor dictated, their creators cannot prescribe in advance or formulate arbitrarily the order in which their archives should come into being. An archive series thus grows, takes shape and undergoes change following its own natural law independently of the caprices of the body or the individual responsible for the transaction that brought it into existence. Every archival series has, therefore, as it were, its own personality, its individuality which is completely separate from and independent of the personality of its maker. This personality is an emanation from the organic link, the natural order or the moral thread which binds all the components of the series together. It is possessed by all the components collectively, by none individually. It is because the individual documents have, by virtue of their place in the series in the natural order of their arrival, the capacity to reflect on each other and supply meaning to each other, that they can combine to confer a personality to the series as a whole. Detached from the series they become deprived of this personality and lose whatever significance they possessed as a component of the series to which they originally belonged. Such documents have no more individuality than a limb severed from the body of a living being. They are without value because they are dead. In other words, they have become archival estrays.

Rightly viewed, therefore, archival estrays are documents which once possessed all the characteristics of a true archive but have been forced to part with many, if not all, of them, by having been violently severed from the connection to which they naturally belonged. They are, as it were, detached limbs of a living record body. It follows as a corollary that a document which never formed a legitimate part of a record body cannot, merely on account of having gone out of the custody to which it may have once belonged, be regarded as an archival estray. Thus the original of the letter written by Lord Macaulay to Thomas Spring-Rice,[17] now in the Bodleian, is not an archival estray, because it never formed part of the official archives of the Government its author had served. But it could certainly have been regarded as one, had Spring-Rice preserved all his

[17] First Baron Monteagle of Brandon in Kerry; Lord Melbourne's Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1835-9. The document is dated 8 February 1836 and is entered as *Ms. Eng. Letters C. 58.*

private correspondence strictly in the order of their receipt or issue and kept Macaulay's letter precisely in the place determined by archival requirements. Macaulay's official minute on education,[18] on the other hand, which should have been kept in the series known as General Department Original Consultations of the Government of India and is no longer there, is a true archival estray. It is an archival estray because it has been violently detached from the connection to which it belonged by virtue of its having been drawn up by its author in the exercise of a legitimate administrative function.

By the same token none of the standard compilations of the letters of Mughal emperors which one finds today, not only in public libraries and museums but also in private collections and even in auctioneer's sale rooms, can be regarded as genuine archival estrays, although most of them are popularly believed to be fragments from the defunct Mughal archives. A most interesting example of this category of materials is provided by a compilation entitled *Muktabat-i-'Allami,* a very early copy of which, transcribed by Abd'ul Quddus in 1630-31, is in the Curzon Collection of the Asiatic Society of Bengal (A.S.B. II. 27).[19] The volume contains copies of what purport to be letters of the great Akbar drafted by Ab'ul Fazl, as well as the latter's own correspondence, along with a considerable body of non-documentary material like specimens of ornate prose composition. But the fact that neither the work nor the material of which it is composed was ever a part of Akbar's records rules out any claim that can be put forward for getting it recognised as an estray from the Mughal archives. Both the British Museum and the India Office provide us with many examples of such pseudo-archival estrays. A case in point is the copy of *Ādāb-i-'Ālamgirī,*[20] entered as OR 177 in the first of these repositories, which embodies copies of a number of letters claimed to have been composed on behalf of Aurangzēb by his private secretary, Shaikh Ab'ul Fatḥ. The compilation of the volume was the work of Ṣadik Muṭṭalibī who is believed to have faithfully drawn on the original drafts of Ab'ul Fatḥ. He has, however, marred the value of the work to a considerable extent by putting into it many adventitious matters such as, for instance, an account of the civil war following Shāh Jahān's illness and several letters of his own drafting stated to have been issued in the name of Prince Akbar. Although the volume is alleged to have been compiled in 1704 A.D.,[21] the British Museum copy bears the date 1713.

[18] Dated 7 March 1835 (General Public Consultation 7 March 1835, No. 5).

[19] Ivanow: *A Concise Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts in the Curzon Collection, Asiatic Society of Bengal,* 1926, p. 120, item 132. The manuscript bears several seals of different officials of Shāh Jahān's Court.

[20] Rieu, *Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts in the British Museum,* p. 399.

[21] Ethé, *Catalogue of Persian Manuscripts in the India Office Library,* pp. 139-40.

It is no more an archival estray than an exhibit in a law-court which is claimed by its producer as an authentic copy of a genuine document which has disappeared for good.

Other examples of the same type of material include Egerton 1004 (f. 121), copy of Aurangzēb's letter to Shāh Jahān prepared in A.D. 1817;[22] Additional 18,881, *Dastūr-ul-'Amal-i-Āgahī*,[23] a compilation made in 1754 from the various popular collections of Aurangzēb's correspondence; and Additional 26,238, *Kalimāt-i-Ṭayibāt*,[24] compiled in 1719 A.D. by Aurangzēb's favourite secretary, Ināyat Ullah Khān, from the Emperor's autograph notes addressed to the compiler. All those are now housed in the British Museum, but although they have found their way into a repository far away from their place of origin, none of them are archival estrays in the true sense of the term.

This is not to say that the British Museum does not house any estrays of the genuine sort. In fact, few other repositories in the world appear to have waxed half as rich at the expense of public record offices and none can boast of such a splendid assemblage of public documents formed out of the wrecks of hundreds of genuine archival series. The collection known as Additional Mss. for instance, is composed for the most part of archival documents that have escaped through various vicissitudes in the past from the regular series in the Public Record Office and elsewhere. Among notable examples are Additional Manuscripts No. 37291, f.208, and No. 37292, ff.49, and 121 to 130, which are in fact Wellesley Papers of the year 1810 and actually bear Foreign Office registration numbers. Another notable instance is provided by the original Papal Bulls previously belonging to the British Exchequer of Receipts and calendared there in 1323,[25] which have, after many wanderings, reached the stacks of the Museum.

As regards archival wanderers from Indian official repositories, no better examples can perhaps be offered than those recently located among the Francis Manuscripts housed with other minor European collections in the former India Office. Volume 77 in the collection, for instance, contains an original minute of Warren Hastings dated 1 November 1776,[26] embodying his proposal for a new office for settlement business, which should have been deposited among the Original Revenue Consultations of the period now in the custody of the West Bengal Government. Other

[22] Rieu, *op. cit.*, 793.
[23] *Ibid*, p. 402.
[24] *Ibid*, p. 401a.
[25] *The antient Kalendars and Inventories in the Treasury of His Majesty's Exchequer* (Records Commission 1832) quoted in Jenkinson, *op. cit.*, p. 25, n. 2).
[26] George Busby Kaye and Edward Hamilton Johnston, *Catalogue of Manuscripts in European Languages*, Volume II, part II, item 21, p. 402.

interesting items in the volume include a minute of Francis of 19 December 1776 on the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court and a number of minutes by Clavering on revenue subjects all of which seem to be pilferings from the Revenue records of the former Government of Fort William.[27] Equally interesting are a set of autograph letters from Lt. Colonel Matthew Leslie, addressed to the Governor-General and Members of the Supreme Council, dating from 23 June to 24 August 1778, which are embodied in volume 60 of the collection and are missing from the records of the Secret Department relating to the period in the custody of the National Archives of India.[28] The same volume contains a number of original letters from Colonel Thomas Goddard on the first Maratha War and two interesting letters from W. Leslie Lewis who refers to 'Nana Farnese' having again got possession of the Government.

Far more exciting in their nature are the estrays which have found their way into volume 83[29] of the same collection and consist of original Secret Consultations of the Supreme Council at Fort William on policy matters connected with the prosecution of the first Maratha War. A most significant document that is wanting in the series at the National Archives of India and is available in this volume is the famous minute of Francis delivered on 4 February 1779 (pp. 11-21). On pages 183-87 occur the original minutes of the members of the Supreme Council dated 1 March 1779 which have disappeared from the Secret series in the Government of India's archives. The series, moreover, now lacks a large number of original papers, such as, for instance, Warren Hasting's minute of 15 March on Bombay affairs, Wheeler's minute of 22 March on the general state of India, and Francis's of 28 June 1779 on the instructions to Colonel Goddard. All these along with many more form the chief components of volume 83 of the Francis Manuscripts.

What however bewilders an archivist most is the presence in the collection of no less than ten volumes of despatches from the Court of Directors to Fort William,[30] which, to all seeming, owe their origin to a most reckless plundering from the archives of the Government of Fort William. Most of the letters in the set are original and autograph and bear on their docket not only the date of their arrival in Calcutta but also the name of the ship by which they were received. The letter of 10 November 1769, for instance, bears on it the endorsement: "Pr. Vansittart Recd. 6 August 1770." There is thus little doubt that this valuable

[27] *Ibid,* pp. 401-402.
[28] *Ibid,* p. 340, items 1-7.
[29] *Ibid,* pp. 422-424.
[30] Volumes 87-96, *Ibid,* pp. 437-45.

collection originally formed an integral part of the Bengal Council's archives.

We have till now confined our enquiry to those archival wanderers which have found a new home away from their legitimate place of residence. But since the term archival estray extends to any archival document which has been violently torn out of the connection to which it naturally belonged independently of the question of its having found a refuge elsewhere, homeless waifs have as much right to be called estrays as the more fortunate ones which have secured a shelter.

A very remarkable example of an estray of the above category is provided by the original *farman* of Emperor Shah Alam II conferring the *Diwani* of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa on the East India Company. There is very little doubt as to the document having been actually received by Lord Clive's Government in 1765 together with the necessary endorsements ; and there is almost equal certainty as to none of these having been officially sent to England. This will be clear from paragraph 32 of the General Letter to Court dated 30 September 1765,[31] the relevant extract from which is quoted below:

> "Lord Clive having arrived in Town and resumed his seat at the Board the 9th instant laid before them an Extract from the Proceedings of the Select Committee held the 7th upon his return . . . together with the translation of a Grant and Sunnuds obtained from the King for the Dewanny of these provinces and of an Agreement subscribed to in consequence by the Nabob through the means of his lordship and Mr. Sykes, as also translation of other Sunnuds from the King confirming to the Company their former possessions and securing to them the reversion of Lord Clive's Jaghier . . . We send you . . . copies of the several Papers above mentioned to which we beg leave to refer to you."

What accompanied the General Letter were, therefore, copies of the several charters obtained by Lord Clive and none of the originals. This is confirmed by the following extract from the Court minute of 30 April 1766:

> "The copies of the following pieces lately received from Fort William by the ship Admiral Steeven were now laid before the Court, Vizt.:
>
> Firmaun of the Dewany of Bengal Behar & Orissa.
> Firmaun of the Dewany of the Province of Bengal.
> Firmaun of the Dewany of the Province of Behar.

[31] The original document in the former India Office bears the endorsement: "Received per Admiral Stevens." I am indebted for this information to Mr. J. R. Lloyd, Superintendent of Records, Commonwealth Relations Office, London.

Firmaun of the Dewany of the Province of Orissa.

Firmaun of the Dewany of Burdwan and the rest of the Company's Possessions in Bengal."

So the documents received by the Court were copies and not the original *farmans*. I believe no one will deny that these are some of the most significant documents connected with the foundation of the British empire in India, yet it is a fact that they can no longer be found.

With the archival documents which seem to have permanently vanished should also be classed those which, without leaving the custody of their legitimate keeper, have simply wandered away from the record body to which they were morally linked. Even when such a document is actually located in its legitimate custody, it can hardly be regarded as anything but an estray till its moral link with its parent body has been established beyond doubt. The fact is that forcible separation of a document from the connection to which it naturally belongs often results in obliterating the very evidence that is essential to the re-establishment of that connection. This is more the case when the document's physical position in the parent series affords the only evidence for its identification. Good examples of such records are provided by the several bundles of unlocated Oriental documents in the National Archives of India which are, in fact, estrays from the archives of the Secret and the Political Departments of the former Fort William Government. These documents were in origin enclosures to letters received by these Departments from the various Residents and Political Agents of the then Supreme Government which had been kept apart because they were written in a non-European language. But as these letters do not bear any sign or mark indicating their relation with other documents in the parent series, and are very often without a signature or a seal or even a date, any attempt to restore them to their legitimate places is likely to be unfruitful.

These are examples of documents which, although they were deposited in legitimate custody at the time of their origin, became subsequently metamorphosed into 'estrays' in consequence of the violent severance of the link that bound them to their natural companions. It would, however, be legitimate to consider, along with these, the cases of those archival documents which were from the outset excluded from their natural custody and thus became 'estrays' from the moment of their origin. The Wellesley papers entered as Additional Manuscripts 37274-5 in the British Museum provide an apt example of such born estrays.[32] These papers are really the official correspondence of Lord

[32] *Catalogue of Additions to the Manuscripts in the British Museum*, 1905-1910 (1912), p. 7.

Mornington, as Governor-General, with Henry Dundas, President of the Board of Control, and consist chiefly of his private, secret and confidential despatches and letters (some few being in cypher), with many lengthy enclosures. These papers were without doubt an integral part of the archives of the Secret Department of the Bengal Government, as they came into being as a result of Mornington's performance of his legitimate functions as Governor-General and embodied his public acts. It is true that Mornington did not consider it necessary to place these papers in the official archives of his Government. But the mere physical placing of a document in a series which is normally expected to include it is not a condition essential to its becoming a legitimate component of that series. The mutual relations between the documents in an archival body are moral rather than physical, and a document becomes morally linked to a series from the very moment when the individual or the body responsible for the transaction which brought the document into being intends that it should be kept in the series in question. Mornington no doubt had no such intention, but since in creating the papers in question he was acting not in his capacity as an individual but as a member of a public body his personal intention had little bearing on the question whether these should or should not have been kept as public records. The intention which ought to determine the question is that of the Government on whose behalf he was acting, and that Government certainly could not have intended that a mass of valuable documents belonging to it and embodying evidence of its activities should be removed from its custody. There is little doubt therefore that the papers were violently torn away by Mornington from the connection to which they legitimately belonged and became in consequence archival estrays. Adams is inclined to class such documents as potentially archival material,[33] but there is no reason why they should not be regarded as full-fledged archives which have lost a great many of their archival attributes by reason of having been forcibly removed from their parent body.

Forcible or illegitimate removal from a natural connection is thus the condition under which a true archive is forced to incarnate itself into an estray. It naturally follows that documents which are simply removed from a series physically without violating their moral links with the latter are not to be regarded as archival estrays. This is a logical corollary from that element in the accepted definition of archives which stresses that documents become archives when they are preserved by their originators or their legitimate successors for their own information. Thus when archives are removed from their natural series for the purposes of

[33] Adams, *op. cit.*, p. 87.

reference in day-to-day administration they should be regarded as performing only their legitimate functions. Even if in fulfilling this purpose they have to leave their natural repository and travel to distant lands, they will not cease to become archives provided the moral link which binds them to their natural companions is not lost, i.e. provided a full record is kept of their movement in all its stages including a record of the identity of the persons officially connected with the movement.[34]

By the same token all transfers of records from their creating body either to an officially appointed custodian or to a body inheriting the functions of the creators are to be regarded as legitimate transfers. Thus the records which have travelled from the repositories of the defunct agencies of the Political Department of the British Government in India to the National Archives of India in consequence of the present Government of India having inherited the former's functions cannot by any stretch of imagination be regarded as archival estrays, and the Government of the United Kingdom have no right to call them back. Nor can it be seriously suggested that the contents of the National Archives of India are estrays from the archives of the different Government Departments which originated them on the sheer ground that they have wandered away from the custody of the latter.

It would follow from the above that the place of origin of a document has absolutely no bearing on the question of its legitimate custody. Contrary to popular belief a document does not belong to the place where it was originated ; it belongs only to the series of which it forms a natural part and travels with the creators of the series or their legitimate successors.[35] Thus the change of headquarters by a government or an administration would certainly justify them in removing their records from their place of origin to the new site. No government would, however, be justified in carrying with it the records created in connexion with the local administration of a territory which it has ceded to another government. The latter, as legitimate successor of the former, has the undoubted right to inherit these records, which, if allowed to follow the ceding authority, will lose their archival quality and become estrays. Thus, the records of the defunct Political Department carried away by the Government of the United Kingdom on the termination of British sovereignty in India as well as those recently removed from Chandernagore

[34] cf. Jenkinson, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

[35] The fallacy owes its genesis to a faulty interpretation of the principle of 'provenance' which really means 'derivation' and not 'place of origin'. The principle of provenance requires that every document should be placed in the record body and that series of that record body to which it belonged, when this body was a living organism. See on this point, Proceedings of the Congress of Brussels, 1910 (*Actes*, published by J. Cuvelier and L. Stainier, Brussels, 1912, p. 633).

by the French Government on the cession of that territory to the Government of India have forcibly been made to shed all their archival attributes. Both the classes of records are estrays because no moral links any longer bind them to the parent bodies of which they once formed integral parts.[36]

We should, however, distinguish true archival estrays from documents which, although they genuinely derive from an individual or a body in the course of the discharge of legitimate functions, cannot, because of their very nature, form part of their creator's archives. To this class belong the letters, despatches or other communications which issue from one person or one office to another and the originals of which cannot certainly be kept in the archives of the office which brought them into existence.[37] Thus neither the General Letters nor the enclosures accompanying them, which travelled from Fort William to Leadenhall Street at regular intervals, are archival estrays from the muniment room of the Bengal Government. They are lawful emigrants possessing valid credentials, not travellers without passports or visas. Nor can any of the original letters of the Mughal emperors, many of which can be seen today both in private and public collections, be described as estrays from Mughal archives, even though they are most certainly derived from the Mughal Imperial Chancery.

Nor should archival estrays be confused with that category of records which Sir Hilary Jenkinson has chosen to designate invertebrate archives,[38] by which he means loose documents which, while fulfilling all the requirements of a true archive, yet lack any visible link binding them together. They usually derive their origin from the administrative practice of keeping separate certain classes of documents by virtue of the special administrative or political interest they possess. A remarkable case in point is the treaty series of the late Foreign and Political Department now housed in the National Archives of India. They are true archives because they were drawn up in the course of the normal transactions of the Government responsible for it, have never left legitimate custody and have been kept in the order of the transaction they relate to or embody. All the same they are separate pieces, more or less complete in themselves and usually have

[36] For a full discussion of these points see Dr. Ernst Posner, 'Effects of Changes of Sovereignty on Archives', *The American Archivist*, July 1942, and Louis Jacob, *La Clause de livraison des archives publiques dans les traites d'annexion*, Paris, 1915.

[37] Kazimierz Konarski, *Nowozytna Archiwistiyka Polska i jej Zadania* (Modern Polish Archival Economy and its Tasks) Warsaw, 1929. The reference is to Chapter II, p. 31, of the draft English translation kindly supplied to me by Oliver W. Holmes of the National Archives, U.S.A. See also Rule 21 of Muller, Feith and Fruin (*op. cit.* p. 72), which requires that it is the destination of a document which should determine the place it is to occupy in an archival collection.

[38] *Op. cit.*, p. 106.

no bearing on each other. Yet it would be wrong to describe them as estrays, for they were never intended to form either morally or physically a part of any other series. Another example of this class is provided by the map collections in an archive repository which are usually built out of enclosures detached from documents forming parts of regular vertebrate archival series. So long as a record is kept of the moral links of the detached maps to the parent body or bodies there will be no justification for doubting their authenticity or regarding them as estrays. The same considerations are applicable to documents which have been isolated by their creator because of their being outsize and have been filed and arranged by him separately.[39]

We have now come to the end of our enquiry, in the course of which it has been our aim to obtain a rough idea as to what the true nature of an archival estray is and how a document which is an estray can be distinguished from a document which is not. Towards this end we have gone some distance by attempting a definition of the word Archives and by deducing from that definition certain characteristics the possession of which would metamorphose any archival document into an archival estray. Our next step would be to attempt an understanding of the various problems to which such a metamorphosis gives rise.

SOURINDRANATH ROY

(To be continued)

[39] *Op. cit.*, pp. 52, 55-56.

THE WORK OF THE RECORDS PRESERVATION SECTION OF THE BRITISH RECORDS ASSOCIATION

THE WEALTH of the historical records to be found in all parts of the British Isles has long been recognised, but the preservation of these records has been largely unco-ordinated, so that their survival has been the result of the constitutional and legal systems existing in England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland. An unwritten constitution and an uncodified body of laws have necessitated the preservation of many documents, not by reason of their historical value, but for their continuing utility for administrative purposes. The need for the concentration in one repository of official national records led to the establishment of the Public Record Office in London in 1838 and of similar institutions in Scotland and Ireland. Independently of administrative necessity, however, the preservation and publication of documents for their historical importance has been considered since the late 18th century by a series of Royal Commissions, which have been responsible for the printing of nearly a hundred volumes of ancient records. A permanent Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, established in 1867, has published reports on many accumulations of records, but inevitably, although not entirely, has concentrated on those in the ownership of semi-public authorities or of important families. Nevertheless, there is still no national authority with control over all records of historical interest whatever their origin.

The records which require to be preserved may very briefly be classified in six categories: (1) Official national records; (2) Documents of national interest but not of official origin, such as the letters and diaries of well-known public men; (3) Official documents emanating from local government authorities, such as cities, boroughs, counties and parishes; (4) Semi-official documents, emanating from ecclesiastical and professional authorities, universities and other educational establishments, public utility undertakings and learned societies; (5) Private documents relating chiefly to landed property, to family history, including letters and diaries, to buildings and to business concerns; (6) Miscellaneous records, which defy classification.

Possibly it may be that in foreign countries and indeed in the more distant parts of the British Commonwealth, the persistence in the British Isles of local pride in county and town has been underestimated. This is particularly the case in regard to England: everyone knows of the patriotism felt in Scotland, Ireland and Wales, but the pride and affection for their own part of England felt by Englishmen is rarely appreciated. These

sentiments have led to the publication of many local histories, beginning perhaps with the *Survey of London,* written by John Stow at the close of the 16th century. The interest in local history flourished without interruption and in the 18th and early 19th centuries resulted in the formation of many antiquarian and historical societies, engaged for the most part in excavating the remains of early settlements and in the invaluable work of publishing local records. A vast mass of material for local history exists among the Public Records, owing in the main to the English type of feudal land-tenure, by which all free land ultimately derived from the Crown. Of similar significance were the fictitious law-suits in the Royal Courts of Justice for the sale of land, the forfeitures of the lands of traitors to the Crown, the dissolution of the monasteries in the 16th century and the custom of enrolling private deeds on the backs (*dorsi*) of certain Chancery rolls. These sources have been widely used by local historians, as well as the records preserved in ancient cities and boroughs, of which perhaps those of the City of London form the most outstanding example. Equally the records of the local Courts of Justice, such as the Quarter Sessions of the Justices of the Peace, and most ecclesiastical records, where they have survived, are to be found in their own areas and are generally available for the use of students. There remains, however, a vast mass of historical material in the hands of private owners or their agents, which is not generally available to historians and the existence of which is hardly known.

The lack of any public control over the preservation of these records has led to the destruction of many documents. In the past, their disappearance has been due to carelessness or ignorance, but the events of the present century have brought about wholesale destruction, even in some cases of official records. Immense damage took place during the First World War through the waste-paper salvage campaigns and further dangers arose owing to modern legislation, such as the *Landed Property Acts* of 1922 and 1924. By these Acts of Parliament, which introduced a much-needed reform of the laws relating to landed property, many old title-deeds and other records have ceased to have any practical legal value and have been destroyed or sold for commercial purposes.

The first step to check this destruction of historical records was taken by the British Records Society, a society chiefly engaged in publishing parochial Registers of Baptisms, Marriages and Burials ; at the urgent demand of some of its members, it started work on securing the preservation of valuable documents, but this pioneer effort was outside the usual activities of the Society and it was felt that a new organisation was needed with this as its chief function. Consequently the year 1933 saw the foundation of the British Records Association on a purely voluntary basis

with two classes of members—institutional and private. The Presidents of the Association have been successive Masters of the Rolls, in whose charge are all the official records of England and Wales. The Association owes a great debt of gratitude to the support given to its work by its Presidents, who have generously added this to their already heavy work as judges of the High Court of Justice and as Keepers of the Public Records. The Council of the Association includes representatives of all archival interests in the British Isles, with the recent exception of the Republic of Ireland, as well as members elected at the Annual General Meeting. Wider interests are considered by the Council, which is still concerned with furthering the establishment of the national authority to which reference has already been made. Although the scheme drawn up before the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939 has not yet come to fruition, it was found practicable to establish one section of the proposed plan and the National Register of Archives for England and Wales, under the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, is engaged through its Committees in many counties and with voluntary help in compiling lists of historical documents and incidentally doing much to interest owners in their preservation.

The constitution of the British Records Association provides for the establishment of special Sections to deal with particular aspects of records preservation and almost before the main body was functioning in full, the Records Preservation Section was established to take over the practical work initiated by the older British Records Society. The funds already collected for this purpose were generously handed over to the Section and when these were exhausted a grant of £600 was made by the Pilgrim Trust. The Section works to some extent independently of the main Association, but always under its authority, and has its own Committee consisting of a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, two Honorary Secretaries and eight elected members, as well as the Officers of the Association *ex-officio*. A close connection has always been maintained with the Public Record Office, especially through the recent Chairmanship of the Committee by Sir Cyril Flower, the former Deputy Keeper of the Public Records, and by Sir Hilary Jenkinson, the present Deputy Keeper. The other eight members, elected annually at a General Meeting of the Section, are chosen for their special knowledge of different aspects of records preservation and come from many parts of the country. Mention should here be made of the enthusiastic work of the late Miss Ethel Stokes, who was honorary secretary of the Section at the time of her death in 1944; she had not only initiated the practical work of the Section, but was able to enlist many voluntary helpers. During the Second World War, she was particularly

engaged in organising the examination of documents collected for the waste-paper salvage campaign ; groups of referees were established in many centres, who searched the material brought in and advised the Salvage Officers as to which documents were worthy of preservation. In this way, a repetition of the disasters which overtook sources for historical study in 1914-18 was largely avoided.

The first necessity for the Records Preservation Section was the provision of offices and sorting rooms for the reception of documents, while proximity to the Public Record Office in Chancery Lane was from the first recognised as being of great importance. Accommodation was found in Stone Buildings in Lincoln's Inn ; when Stone Buildings were bombed, the Section moved to Took's Court. But here again disaster overtook the offices in one of the many London air raids and a very small office was found in Lincoln's Inn, while storage space was provided at the Public Record Office, from which most of the national records had been evacuated. It may be recalled that very few documents were lost by enemy action. In these difficult circumstances, the Section was able to carry on ; but with the peace new quarters were obtained at the Law Society's Hall in Chancery Lane. In 1949, however, these were required by the Society, owing to its own increasing activities, and once again the Section was faced with finding offices in Central London, where rents are phenomenally high. Most fortunately larger offices were obtainable at the Charterhouse, the 17th century Hospital, or in more modern parlance 'hostel', for the reception as Brothers of professional men, who had in their old age fallen upon evil days. Readers of *The Indian Archives* will perhaps remember that in Thackeray's novel, *The Newcomes,* old Colonel Newcome became a Brother of the Hospital, though it was disguised under the name of Greyfriars and that Thackeray himself was a pupil at the school belonging to the same foundation. The Charterhouse is just outside the City of London, not far from St. Paul's Cathedral, and the Section may indeed think itself fortunate in finding offices there, let on very generous terms by the Governors and available until bomb-damage repairs are completed and the full quota of Brothers can come back to the Charterhouse.

The practical work of the Records Preservation Section is carried on by two Honorary Secretaries, an Executive Officer, the one full-time paid official of the Association, who is in charge of sorting and distributing documents to permanent repositories, and various part-time assistants. Since the end of the War in 1945, the necessary funds have been found through a public appeal made by the Master of the Rolls as President of the British Records Association in a letter to *The Times* and other news-

papers; the Council of the Association has also made a special grant from the general funds of the Association which had accumulated during the War; and lastly special donations and increased annual subscriptions have been received from the members themselves. The increased subscriptions are particularly welcome, as they will establish the future work of the Section on a firmer financial basis. It may be pointed out here that the minimum annual subscriptions to the Association have always been kept at a very low rate so that all those interested in the preservation of historical manuscripts can make their contribution.

With the exception of the special work organised during the War, the work of the Section has been continued on the principles laid down at the foundation of the Association. The only changes that have been made are due to increased activities. These may be roughly divided into four classes: firstly, to seek out accumulations of documents which may be in danger of destruction; secondly, to examine documents, generally in the hands of private owners or their representatives, and to give advice on the best means to ensure their preservation, while technical advice as to repairing damage due to damp, rodents or insects is referred to a special department of the Association; thirdly, to receive for sorting documents sent to the Section and to place them in suitable repositories; fourthly, to issue, with the consent of the Council of the Association, a series of *Memoranda*, giving advice on the preservation of documents in general or of particular types.

The primary need, in the first class, has been to make people aware of the value, from an historical point of view, of records which may be in their possession. Though enthusiasts and historians have long recognised the interest of documents of all kinds for local, economic and social history, many others still think that records relating to national history alone are of importance. This crusade was started by letters, both to daily newspapers and to specialised journals, by lectures to professional societies and also to such popular organisations as Women's Institutes, and by propaganda by individual members. Post-war conditions have added their quota to the dangers threatening documents with destruction. Many owners have been forced by financial stringency to leave the houses where their families have lived for many years, even for centuries, to move to smaller homes and to part with many possessions of all kinds. The more valuable documents may find their way with books and artistic treasures to salerooms, although frequently persuasion and a feeling of family pride may prevent this, especially as so often some of the most interesting records may have but little financial value and would eventually find their way to the waste-paper merchants. Rather than such a disaster to their old

records, they patriotically agree to deposit them in the repositories suggested by the Records Preservation Section. The same housing difficulties have arisen in regard to accumulations in solicitors' offices. Many buildings in London and other large towns were bombed; new premises are difficult to find and consequently there has been a great rise in the rents asked in suitable parts of the town, so that solicitors have been obliged to turn out their strong-rooms. Here too there is a continual danger of the destruction of records no longer of practical use and the Section still hears of van-loads of parchments being sent away for commercial purposes. For instance, parchment deeds can be made into elegant lampshades or paper-baskets. The Section wages a continual battle against such practices, but has not yet been completely successful: even an owner, who from her standing and education should have known better, was only prevented with great difficulty from turning her family deeds into lampshades for her new home. This is a sorry story; but recognition must be given to the many firms of solicitors, who ask the Section to sort on their premises or to take away to the Charterhouse any documents not required. In one such instance, after two members of the staff had gone to look over a set of family records and were about to take them away there and then, the solicitor pointed to an open wooden case and asked if they would like that as well. He had no idea of its contents nor their origin, but surmised that they must have been moved from an older office nearly a hundred years ago and lain untouched in the strong-room ever since. From the amount of accumulated dust in the box this seemed very likely, but the first paper picked up turned out to be a letter from a 17th century magnate and the offer to take away the box was gladly accepted. This story is only one of many. The treasure-trove which may be found is quite incalculable and lends a never-ending excitement to the work. Some particular examples of finds in lawyers' offices may be of interest to record:—a charter of Henry of Blois, the 12th century Bishop of Winchester and brother of King Stephen; deeds of the 14th century relating to one of the extinct city guilds of Bristol; other documents relating to property in Calais, the last of the English possessions in France; the papers of a court physician to James I, the first Stuart King of England, who was sent to Edinburgh to bring the little Prince Charles, afterwards Charles I, to join the royal family in England. These papers contained not only an account of the journey and of the health of the delicate boy, but also notes relating to the abortive attempt made by the King to unite the Parliaments of England and Scotland. Amongst family papers, besides the numerous legal parchments relating to landed property and family settlements, there may occasionally be found state documents, presumably carried home by some

official and never returned to his office; there may be notes relating to state affairs, such as plans for the reform of the national finances when, under the strain of the European wars of the 18th century, the old systems of raising money were breaking down; or there may be letters relating to business ventures, diaries or travel journals, and correspondence concerning the purchase of works of art or of manuscripts. Documents relating to naval and military matters may also be found, such as the diary of a young military officer stationed during the Napoleonic Wars in the West Indies, but interesting chiefly from the naval information recorded—the arrival of English ships, reports of the movements of French ships and of conditions in the French islands. Records of the East India Company are numerous; to mention two, there is a Commission signed by Lord Clive permitting an officer to hold courts martial, and the diary of an officer, not indeed of great interest in itself, but surprising in that it covers the years of the Indian mutiny without even mentioning that event. Such examples illustrate the widespread interests of the people of the British Isles; but the majority of the thousands of documents reaching the office of the Section relate to family property, including manorial court-rolls, rentals, leases, etc., which provide much information concerning changes in ownership, social conditions, agriculture, local government and education as well as building development of all kinds.

The Records Preservation Section has been chiefly concerned with documents to be found in London, but as its work has become more and more widely appreciated it is frequently approached for advice on accumulations in other parts of the country, and where possible the inquirers are put into touch with the archivists of local repositories and librarians. This brings up a subject of great importance since the safe disposal of the records with which it deals is a matter continually under review. The changes in local government, which took place in the 19th century and are still continuing, have brought about a revolution in the housing of official records, little envisaged by the reformers who worked to establish new authorities and to re-organise existing ones. With the new responsibilities placed on counties, county boroughs, old boroughs and cities, came a corresponding growth in the number of official records in their charge. This resulted in the establishment of new or enlarged repositories for their reception. Equally the wide franchise exercised by local electors has made more and more people conscious of the historical value of their local records, whether public or private, so that local authorities are now prepared to receive records of the past whatever their origin. Trained archivists are appointed, able to read the ancient scripts and the Latin in

which many old records are written. Again the rolls and other records of manorial courts are protected by statute, and if a lord of a manor wishes to part with them, they must be placed in a repository recognised by the Master of the Rolls for this purpose. In some parts of the country such repositories are in the hands of antiquarian societies, but more and more the local government authorities, following the example set by Bedfordshire, are becoming the most important guardians of local documents. The Section has taken full advantage of this development, but it still sends documents of specialised content to museums, libraries and societies. It has always distributed documents on definite principles and these, together with a statement of the methods followed in practice, have lately been defined afresh and issued in a *Memorandum*, which may fitly be included here.

The Distribution of Documents by the Records Preservation Section to Approved Repositories

Part I

Procedure observed by the Section.

I. All Documents are distributed by the Section subject to acceptance of the Conditions laid down in Part II of this *Memorandum*.

II. Each Consignment of Documents received at the Office of the Section, whether sent to it by the Owner or by a firm of Solicitors, Estate Agents or Auctioneers or from any other source, is registered with the name of the source and given a distinguishing Number.

III. The Registration Number is stamped on every Document contained in the Consignment.

IV. The Registration Number, the source and any conditions made by the Donor or Depositor are clearly indicated to the Repository receiving Documents.

V. Documents are not normally listed by the Sorters working for the Section.

VI. Documents relating to places in England and Wales are sent as a rule to Repositories recognised by the Master of the Rolls for the reception of 'Manorial Records', unless the Donor or Depositor stipulates for some other arrangement. Documents relating to Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic are sent to the National Repositories of those Countries. Documents relating to other parts of the British Commonwealth or to Foreign Countries, or having no local connexion, are distributed at the discretion of the Section.

Part II

Conditions of Distribution.

A. No Documents in any category, once accepted by a Repository, shall be transferred to another repository or destroyed without the permission of the Records Preservation Section.

B. Documents which have been accepted as a gift shall become the property of the Repository to which they have been distributed; but when the original Donor or Custodian prefers to deposit Documents on 'permanent loan', the provisoes made by him shall be formally recorded and their observation guaranteed by the receiving Repository.

C. A List of all Documents received, whether as gifts or on loan, shall be compiled as soon as possible by the receiving Repository and if desired a copy shall be sent to the Donor or Custodian.

D. Reasonable accommodation shall be provided for the use of the Documents by responsible Students.

E. Documents forming a single Group, i.e. resulting from the affairs of a single individual, family or institution, even if the Group is composite (relating to different localities or subjects), shall not be separated: the policy of the Records Preservation Section is to send such an accumulation as a whole to the Repository for the area in which the chief residence of the individual or family or the headquarters of the institution is, or was, situated.

F. Where, owing to limitations of space or staff, the retention by a Repository of a large number of 'foreign' Documents (i.e., Documents not relating to the area covered by the work of the Repository) is impossible, the British Records Association will sanction the breaking up of a composite Group of Documents into its smaller components, and the distribution of these to other Repositories, on the following conditions:—

1. that the permission of the Records Preservation Section and of the Donor or Depositor shall first be obtained;
2. that before any dispersal of Documents takes place each of them shall be stamped with the distinguishing mark of the Repository to which they were sent by the Section, and numbered;
3. that these Marks and Numbers shall be permanently retained (even if new ones are added by the Repository to which the Documents are transferred) so as to preserve the integrity of the original Group;
4. that the Documents shall be listed as soon as possible after transfer and a copy of the List sent to the Repository which originally received them; and

5. that any Repository receiving Documents so transferred shall be prepared formally to accept the conditions on which they were originally distributed by the Records Preservation Section.

The last of the activities of the Section, enumerated above, is the issue free of charge of a series of short *Memoranda,* designed to give guidance to everyone interested in the preservation of records, whether historians, owners or guardians of documents or members of the public. They have been drawn up by the Section with the consent of the Council, and though started to meet emergencies arising during the War, their proved usefulness has resulted in their becoming a regular feature of the work of the Section. Fourteen have already been printed and a revised edition of the first is now in the course of preparation. A list of their titles gives evidence of the wide range of the activities of the Section.

1. *Obsolete Poor Law Records* (1942).
2. *The Safeguarding of Parish Records* (1942).
3. *Records. What should we try to save?* (1942).
4. *Salvage from Solicitors' Offices* (1942).
5. *Old Parchments* (1942).
6. *First Aid for Damaged Manuscripts* (1942).
7. *Modern Records. What may we destroy?* (1943)
8. *Accumulations in Solicitors' Offices* (1946).
9. *Modern War Records* (1946).
10. *Modern Records. Preservation and Salvage* (1948, revised 1951).
11. *Rules for Dealing with Accumulations of Documents* (1949).
12. *Preservation of School Records: England and Wales* (1950).
13. *The Distribution of Documents by the Records Preservation Section to Approved Repositories* (1952).
14. *Preservation of Rating Records: (England and Wales): Rate Books* (1952).

A copy of each *Memorandum* is now sent to all members of the Association, but otherwise they are distributed where it is thought they will be of most use. It may be noted that No. 10 was distributed to all the subscribers to the *Law Society's Gazette,* January 1949, and so reached a wide circle of lawyers; the re-issue in 1951 has been used in combating the destruction of documents in the course of the waste-paper campaign. No. 12 has, with the assistance of the Ministry of Education, been circulated to all Local Education Authorities in England and Wales and also brought to the notice of readers of various educational journals, whilst No. 14 will be sent to all Rating authorities, having been issued in consequence of the alterations as to the custody of Rating records made under the *Local Government Act* of 1948.

In conclusion, something must be added about the General Meeting of the Records Preservation Section which is held as part of the two days Annual Conference of the British Records Association. This meeting in London gives an opportunity for everyone, whether representing an institution or as a private member, of coming into closer contact with the officials of the Section and with each other and of discussing the problems which have arisen during the year. The business meeting is held first, when the yearly Report is presented by the Committee and adopted and the officials and members of the Committee are elected. The financial position is also considered, although the accounts of the Section are now drawn up as part of those of the Association. Various suggestions are also made by members for increasing the efforts to safeguard documents of all kinds. A discussion meeting then follows; until the meeting held in 1951, the subjects for discussion and the speakers have been announced on the agenda and members have heard papers on the following list of subjects: The Cataloguing of Deeds; Methods of Publicity to prevent the Destruction of Local and Private Records; Manorial Records, their Interest and Preservation; Facilities open to the Local Amateur for Instruction in dealing with Ancient Documents; Records in Peril; Methods of Rescue and Disposal used by the Records Preservation Section; Methods of Co-operation between Local Organisations in the Preservation of Documents; The Preservation, Nature and Uses of Records compiled in and preserved by Schools; The Preservation of Old Diaries, Letters and Photographs; Records of Local Clubs and Societies. Before the War, in addition to the business meetings and discussions, an evening reception was held during the Conference, which provided a greatly appreciated opportunity for members to meet each other in the pleasant surroundings of the Hall of one of the City Companies. Here too there were the additional attractions to be found in the Exhibitions of Documents arranged by the Records Preservation Section. In 1936, there was an Exhibition of Manorial Records and in 1938 a Loan Exhibition of Maps and Plans.

These social occasions came to an end with the War, although the Conferences were still held in London, and it has not been found possible to revive them since. Three exhibitions of records have, however, been held at the Hall of the Stationers' Company. In 1948, the Association arranged an Exhibition of Railway Records, which since the nationalisation of the railways have passed into the charge of British Railways. The new Corporation is fully aware of the historical value of these records, which illustrate not only one of the great engineering enterprises of the last century, but also the resulting changes in social life. They also contain collections of title deeds of property acquired by the railway companies.

Some of these are of considerable antiquity; for instance when London Bridge Station was built, the site was acquired from St. Thomas' Hospital, which had owned and occupied it since the early 13th century and the ancient title deeds passed to the new owners. On the same occasion the Records Preservation Section arranged an exhibition of private diaries and old photographs illustrating the social life of the last century. The following year there was an exhibition of the records of Local Clubs and Societies. These included Minute Books, the earliest starting in 1727, of Farmers' Clubs and Agricultural Societies, records of Working Men's and Mechanics' Institutes, Friendly and Saving Societies and others, all with a serious purpose. In contrast there were records of sporting, gaming and dramatic clubs.

At the Conference held in 1951, in an attempt in a small way to fill the gap left by the discontinuance of the evening receptions, the Records Preservation Section changed the procedure at its Annual General Meeting. The Business Meeting was held as usual on the afternoon of the first day of the Conference, but as members of the Association would have the opportunity to hear three set papers during the two days of the Conference, it was decided that the Section should only have a short discussion on points arising out of the Annual Report. This left time for tea and conversation. Since this was much appreciated, it is hoped to follow the new programme, with a few amendments, at the coming Conference next December. Possibly in 1953, when the Association will be celebrating the twentieth anniversary of its foundation, it will be possible to resume the full programme at the Conference, but the members of the Association are proud to record that it has been able to carry on the practical work of saving historical documents from destruction and to meet to consider immediate and future policies not only during the War but in the difficult times which followed it. But it is an expanding organisation, expanding in influence and in its field of operation, and constantly approached for information and advice. In this expansion the Records Preservation Section, secure in wide support for its efforts on behalf of historical studies, is taking its full share; its office is overflowing with documents sent to it for distribution, some indeed the result of almost spectacular rescues from ruthless destruction.

C. Jamison

PROTECTION OF BOOKS AND RECORDS FROM INSECTS

THE PROTECTION of books and records from insect attack is seldom an easy matter though there are some methods of treatment that will render attack less likely. For instance, books that are in frequent use are practically never attacked and the same applies to books that are moved regularly. Further, books that are packed tightly into shelves are more likely to be attacked than those that have plenty of space. In large libraries these recommendations are obviously difficult to adopt—some sections are seldom used and books on obscure subjects remain on their shelves undisturbed sometimes for years. In theory they should be dusted and cleaned from time to time—but this does not always happen!

A wide variety of insects can attack books and records. Various species of moth larvae may be found in the hinges of books feeding on the glue in the back and on the paste in the boards. They will, on occasion, make galleries in the paper, penetrating many pages and frequently turning back to the binding board from which they started. They may also attack leather bound books on the outside if these are stacked close together, and may eat the surface in meandering strips, especially if the cover has been given a dressing containing animal fats.

Cockroaches of different kinds usually attack the outside of books, eating the gummed title from the back or making blotched marks where they have removed the top surface of either leather or cloth—in the latter instance probably feeding upon the dressing. They do not often damage the pages.

Silverfish on the other hand attack the edges of the pages and leave a characteristic fretted edge, and the paper is occasionally eaten so that it looks like lacework.

When old books have wooden boards many wood-boring beetles attack them, and sometimes bore through the paper in trying to emerge from the pupa. When books are tightly packed on wooden shelves, beetles will often come out of the sides of the bookshelf and bore their way through the adjacent books in an effort to escape. Many kinds of beetle will attack books and records by preference—some for the sake of the glue, starch or dressing, others because some type of paper is preferred—or casually, because the bottom of a book back on a shelf is a good place to pupate. The damage is varied and often widespread, sometimes only small holes are bored, at other times extensive galleries are made in binding and pages.

Fungus and mould feeders like the Psocids, so-called booklice, are said to cause damage to books and papers. It may well be that in feeding on mould and mildew they remove the surface of the paper or binding, but the fault is in allowing the mould to form in the first place—due to a high degree of dampness which is, in any event, unsuitable for the storage of books.

One last group of insects should be mentioned. In certain areas they are, if given the chance, the most destructive of all, namely the termites. Dry wood and wet wood termites differ widely in their habits but given the right humidity for their type they can destroy anything made of cellulose in a surprisingly short time, though they are said to be more likely to attack wood-work first.

Recognition

Librarians and archivists should be on the watch for small piles of dust and when these are seen, examine them carefully to find out their cause. One often gets the first warning from small scraps of leather below the back of a volume or small collections of parchment or paper in boxes where records are kept. Sometimes a half seen movement amongst the books leads to further investigation and the first signs of damage. Some insects spin a kind of web either as protection when feeding or as a cocoon. Traces of this kind should be sought and any insect on the wing noted—it may be only a fly, harmless to books, but it may equally well be some other insect far from harmless, so all insects in the library should be regarded with suspicion.

Protection

A vacuum cleaner helps to prevent insect attack by removing debris and also because its use usually entails a movement of the books. In any event it causes disturbance of the air which may cause insects to reveal themselves.

Various chemicals have been used to protect books and papers; mercuric chloride is one of the oldest but it is very poisonous and persistent. It is not to be recommended for general use because of the hazard to human beings even years after application. S.S. Block[1] used 5% mercuric chloride to protect books and found it effective against the American Cockroach. He also found that ammonium and potassium thiocyanate gave a high degree of protection. These chemicals are much less poisonous than mercuric chloride. Care must be taken against the

[1] Block, S. S.—*Industrial and Engineering Chem.* 43. 7. July, 1951.

presence of iron ; otherwise a rust red stain will discolour the paper, ferric thiocyanate having been formed.

Lindsay[2] in Australia protected papers against the Australian Silver-fish by using a 1%-2% solution of tricresylphosphate in refined kerosene either brushed on or sprayed. He also worked with a watery solution of tartar emetic (potassium antimony tartrate).

Recently Bracey and Barlow[3] have been experimenting with various insecticides such as DDT, Aldrin, Pentachlorphenol, Pyrethrum/Piperonal, Butoxide and Gamma BHC in Urea Formaldehyde resins. There seems to be promise in this method but the resins cannot be applied to leather bound books as the binding is entirely altered in appearance after treatment and appears shiny, as if varnished. These resins seem more suitable for cloth bindings and end papers, or for the treatment of shelves.

Books that are actively infested can be freed by placing them in air-tight boxes with paradichlorobenzene crystals at a rate of 1 lb to 10 cubic feet of air space. The crystals vaporise away fairly rapidly at high temperatures and must be renewed as they do so. It is only by keeping the concentration of vapour high that insects will be killed. Books not often used could be kept in such boxes which, if sealed, would prevent further infestation—or they might be replaced on shelves treated with a coating of urea formaldehyde resin containing a suitable insecticide.

It is thought on the whole, in this country (England) at any rate, that wooden shelves are preferable to metal as there is less likelihood of condensation of moisture and generally wood is less hard on the bindings. The advantage of metal on the other hand is obvious—it cannot be attacked by insects.

Spraying or painting suitable places with persistent or residual insecticides like DDT, BHC, Chlordane in a kerosene base or as an emulsion might be valuable though little work has been done on these lines so far.

Interleaving valuable books with tissue paper impregnated with Thymol and an insecticide might be possible in some instances though apt to make the book very bulky. Thymol will suppress the mould and the insecticide should prevent insect attack—but this is not yet proven.

A. W. McKenny Hughes

[2] Lindsay, E.—*Proc. Roy. Soc.* Vic. 52 ; *Tasm. J. Agric.* 10, 1.
[3] Bracey, P. & Barlow, F.—Colonial Insecticides Committee, Research Unit, Porton, Wiltshire. July 1952. (Report unpublished).

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN MICROREPRODUCTION

IN 1931, Dr. L. Bendikson, Chief of the Department of Photographic Reproductions at Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery at San Marino in California, suggested that the bulk of official documents could be reduced by miniature facsimile reproduction on photographic paper and that a low power microscope could be used for reading. He used photographic paper measuring 5″ × 8″ on which 10-50 pages of a book were reproduced with 1 : 7 or 8 reduction ratio. By the beginning of the twentieth century not only had the voluminous bulk of official documents begun to present a problem of storage space but the librarians were also viewing with concern the staggering rate of library expansion and struggling to keep the costs of library service within their means. In 1944, Freemont Rider, Librarian of the Wesleyan University Library, introduced through his book *The Scholar and Future of the Research Library* the revolutionary concept of 'microcards'.

'Microcards' are of a standard size, *i.e.* 7½ × 12½ cm. library catalogue cards, having on them not only the catalogue entry in more or less conventional form readable by the naked eye, but also the complete text of the described material in greatly reduced size, which can be read with the help of a suitable 'reader'. Microcards therefore are text-cum-catalogue cards. For the individual scholar his library catalogue itself becomes the book or article collection as well, and the moment he selects the catalogue card, he automatically gets the text. In library service microcards eliminate or at least substantially reduce the cost involved in processing of books such as making catalogue entries, binding etc. Since the microcard text is already provided with a suitable catalogue entry, the same may, if the institution so chooses, merely be copied to prepare its catalogue cards, and thereby save both labour and time. Further unlike books or journals, microcards need no binding. In addition they point to a solution of storage space.

Realizing, therefore, the great possibilities of the idea introduced by Rider, a Microcard Committee appointed by all major American Library Associations, in close collaboration with Eastman Kodak, Rochester, New York, and Northern Engraving and Manufacturing Company of La Crosse, Wisconsin, has been supervising the standardization of size, format, catalogue entry, text reduction ratio etc. of the microcard. The publishing and sale of microcards, however, is carried out by independent organizations linked through a nonprofit-making educational institution, the Microcard Foundation, Middleton, Connecticut.

Photographic paper is the medium of reproduction and publishers supply only positive prints to the customer. The number of micropages reproduced on each microcard varies from 30-150 depending upon the nature and size of the text. The size of the microcard, as already mentioned, has been standardized to that of the international library catalogue card, *viz.* 7½ × 12½ cm., so that these can be filed in standard catalogue card cabinets. The catalogue entry has five different forms of heading enabling their filing according to any of the following:—

(*a*) Dewey Decimal Classification.
(*b*) Library of Congress Classification.
(*c*) Alphabetical Subject heading.
(*d*) Alphabetical Author entry.
(*e*) Alphabetical Title entry.

Microcards in general cost 40-60% less than a microfilm copy. Not only is the medium of reproduction, *i.e.* photographic paper, cheaper than film, but the production of microcards also follows the lines of the normal process of publishing an edition. The fixed costs involved are spread over a number of copies and the technique is most suitable where 10 to 50 copies are required.

To read the opaque microcards an excellent Micro-library Reader, based on episcopic principles and capable of giving 24 magnification has been developed. A smaller and cheaper device called a 'Scrutinizer' is also available. It gives 5 or 7 power magnification and is intended for rapid short scanning work, but not for regular use as a reader.

Whereas researchers in the U.S.A. have been experimenting mainly with roll microfilm and opaque microcards, experiments in Europe have tended to concentrate on film strips and flat films. In Germany, by 1939, Dr. J. Goebel had perfected the technique for microcopying documents on flat film and the development of microfiche was a natural step. "Microfiche" is a name which has been suggested for what essentially are microcards on transparent film. Goebel, now working with the Netherlands Documents Reproduction Limited, at The Hague, uses two cameras, one for the microreproduction of the text wherein many image sizes varying from 9 × 11 mm. to 24 × 26 mm. are possible, and the other to insert the title at the top so as to be readable by the unaided eye. In Germany the size of the card is generally the standard photographic format of 9 × 12 cm. In the Netherlands, as in the U.S.A., the international library format of 7½ cm. × 12½ cm. is preferred. The cards are kept in white paper envelopes in such a way that the title entries remain visible against a white background. This is achieved by folding the front flap of the envelope behind the card.

In France, at the Centre de Documentation de la Marine, Paris, M. M. Cordonnier produces transparent microcards slightly different from those described above. He uses double perforated flat film, and has four rows of 8 images each on every card. Two of the 32 images are reserved for the title, classification etc. For storing, small books with storage capacity of 10 or 100 microfiche each and having their pages folded like an accordeon, are used.

Whereas in the U.S.A. the development of the microcard has mainly followed the lines of a commercial publishing house and, as already indicated, only paper positive copies are distributed to the customers, the usual practice on the Continent is to supply the negative as well as the positive microfiche. Of course like the opaque microcards the cost per copy comes down considerably if a larger number of positive copies are ordered. The cost can further be reduced by approximately 20% if positive copies are made on diazo material which is cheaper than photographic.

One of the great advantages that the transparent microfiche can claim over the opaque microcard is that a weaker source of light can be utilized in any reader devised for transparencies, thereby eliminating excessive heat. Flexible reading machines such as the Microvist and the Microliseuse have been developed. There is an arrangement in these machines for not only direct reading of transparencies but also for projection on a screen. Further provision also exists for adapting them to read the roll film. There is also the advantage that microcard transparencies easily lend themselves to further duplication.

As distinct from microreproduction on photographic paper or film, Albert Boni, formerly of the publishing firm of Boni and Liveright, has developed microprint, a method of microprinting on paper. Mr. Boni produced his first work in 1941, but pending further technical development the operations were suspended in 1942 and have only since 1950 been resumed by the Readex Microprint Corporation, Chester, Vermont. The microcopy of the original is produced by photographic reduction as a negative from which after intermediate processing copies are made on a printing press. The degree of sharpness achieved is the same as in microphotography, and the process lends itself to microreproduction of pictures.

The standard unit for use is a sheet of white paper 6″ × 9″ prepared according to the specifications for permanent record prescribed by the National Bureau of Standards, U.S.A. The micropages are usually arranged in 10 rows of 10 pages each, thereby making possible a decimal arrangement which facilitates the selection of the desired page when the cards are in the Readex Microreader. The decimal pattern is not observed in the large size daily papers, or in the case of small items on 3″ × 5″

catalogue cards. It is possible to microprint both sides of the paper thereby increasing the capacity of each microprint to 200 micropages. Microprints are delivered in cloth bound slip cases duly labelled and ready for shelving with books. The Readex Microprintreader which is being marketed now has a mechanism for adjusting the intensity of screen illumination and is provided with two interchangeable fine grain and grainless screens. It is claimed that for the first time the proverbial hot spot has been eliminated and that the image on the translucent screen is of the quality of one projected on an opaque screen.

The microcard, transparent or opaque, does not introduce any new elements previously unknown to microphotography. Essentially this is microreproduction on flat film or paper. It does, however, introduce the ingenious idea that the solution of many problems facing specialized libraries and scholars can best be tackled at the stage where literature is published or duplicated for them. With various microcard projects already under way, the librarians, for the first time in history, are now experimenting with materials which have the great advantage of having been planned and developed under the scrutiny of a body widely representative of library interests and of sound professional standards. Microprint on the other hand is a new technique in the field of printing. The Readex Company does not intend to undertake any project involving less than 50 copies and the fact that the media of reproduction is rag paper not only makes each copy cheaper than microfilm or microcard but also more acceptable to those who, in spite of the work of the National Bureau of Standards, U.S.A. on the permanency of photographic media, are still sceptical about adopting them for permanent preservation.

It need hardly be stressed that these recent developments in microreproduction have vast potentialities which will greatly influence the entire field of documentation. They not only affect the world of publication, the technique of library service, the equipment in scholarly institutions, the nature of inter-library loans, and the reading habits of research workers, but may also well prove a landmark in the field of abstracting service.

R. C. GUPTA

THE FIRST INDIAN LAW COMMISSION

CHARLES GRANT, the President of the Board of Control, speaking in the House of Commons on 13 June 1833 on the subject of the renewal of the charter of the East India Company, said that the system of government in India suffered from three imperfections: the first was in the nature of the laws and regulations by which India was governed; the second was in the ill-defined authority and power from which these various laws and regulations emanated; and the third was the anomalous and sometimes conflicting judicatures by which the laws were administered; in other words, the defects were in the laws themselves, in the authority for making them, and in the manner of executing them.[1] To remedy the second imperfection the legislative powers of the Provincial Governments were withdrawn, and the Governor-General in Council was vested with plenary and well defined powers to enact laws for the whole of India, subject only to certain restrictions, principally for safeguarding the authority of Parliament and the prerogatives of the Crown. The responsibility for finding proper remedies for the other two defects lay squarely with the Governor-General in Council himself. But Parliament provided the latter with two aids. Firstly, the Council was reinforced by the addition of a leading jurist from outside the ranks of the Company's civil service, who was to devote his entire attention to the task of legislation.[2] Secondly, a body known as the Indian Law Commission with a strength of not more than five members was constituted. The objects in view were to develop a general system of judicial establishments and police, common both to Indians and to Europeans; to evolve a common system of laws with due regard to the rights, feelings, and peculiar usages of the people, and to ascertain and consolidate all laws and customs having the force of law. The Commission was to conduct enquiries and report to the Governor-General in Council, and its reports were to be laid before both Houses of Parliament.[3]

The Commission was fully constituted on 15 June 1835 with the appointment of Macaulay, who was at that time the Fourth Member of Council, as its first President. So long as Macaulay held that office the practice was to refer to the Commission all matters of any importance that came up before the Council on its legislative side, and the general

[1] Hansard's *Parliamentary Debates* (1833), Vol. XVIII, p. 729.
[2] 3 & 4 Wm. IV. c. 85. *ss.* 40 & 43.
[3] *Ibid, ss.* 53 & 54.

tendency was to regard the Commissioners as "Legislative Assessors".[4] With the coming of Amos the current legislation of the country was conducted exclusively in the Council, and the business of the Commission was for the most part confined to "extensive and organic changes of system including elaborate reports on slavery, the *lex loci,* the training of civil servants for judicial offices, and like matters."[5] During the time of Ellenborough an acute controversy arose as to the general utility of the work of the Commission. Even Auckland had recommended the closing of the Commission apparently as a measure of economy,[6] and Ellenborough regarded it as "an useless mischievous burden on the country".[7] The opinion among the members of the Council was that the reports of the Commission were doctrinaire and unpractical and evinced a thorough lack of understanding of the conditions and problems of life in India ; and there came to the surface a strong divergence of opinion regarding the general policy of the Commission. The opinion among the authorities both in India and in England was not favourable to its continuance, but the Court of Directors was hesitant to approach Parliament for an amendment of the statute.[8] Vacancies in the membership of the Commission arising after 1843 were not filled, and with the return of Cameron to England and the departure of Eliott in February 1848 to join the Madras Council the Commission became defunct for a few months. Dalhousie was of opinion that to allow this state of affairs to continue was contrary to the express provision of the statute. To satisfy the letter of the law that there should be a Commission and at the same time to meet the known aversion of the Court to any expenditure on that account he appointed two members of Council as members of the Commission without any grant of an extra allowance. He provided, however, for a full time Secretary to shoulder the real responsibility. The Court approved of the appointment of the members of the Commission but not of a full time Secretary, and the latter post was abolished.[9] The Commission lingered on in name till the end of the period of the charter, but it should be considered to have come to an end really in February 1848.

[4] Minute by Lord Auckland dated 12 April 1838, Legislative Proceedings, 30 April 1838, no. 9.

[5] Minute by A. Amos dated 27 January 1843, Legislative Proceedings, 7 April 1843, no. 18.

[6] Extract from Lord Auckland's minute dated 28 February 1842—*Ibid,* no. 17.

[7] Minute by J. E. D. Bethune dated 12 April 1850, Legislative Proceedings, 19 July 1850, no. 3. Also, Lord Ellenborough's letter (Legislative) to the Court of Directors dated 22 April 1843.

[8] Legislative Proceedings, 7 April 1843, nos. 17-20 ; 22 December 1843, nos. 1-5 ; Political Proceedings, 10 May 1843, nos. 1-4 ; Legislative Letter from the Court of Directors to the Governor-General in Council, 29 November (no. 22) 1843.

[9] Original Legislative Consultations, 2 September 1848, nos. 19-21 ; Legislative Proceedings, 17 February 1849, nos. 1-5.

Widely different opinions have been expressed regarding the value of the work of the Commission. Contemporary opinion was highly critical of its views and recommendations. But the fact that so little of its work found its way to the statute book before the Mutiny should be attributed at least as much to the preoccupation of the Council with political and foreign affairs and its inability to devote sufficient attention to the consideration of the projects of reform recommended by the Commission as to the unsatisfactory nature of those projects.[10] Whatever the final judgment on the subject, having regard to the wide scope of the Commission's enquiry into the nature of the laws and the judicial and administrative institutions of the country, there is no denying the value of the materials collected by the Commission and of the reports submitted by it for a study of the legal, administrative, and socio-economic history of the times. In view of this it is a matter of great regret that the original papers of the Commission should have been mostly lost. The National Archives of India has only three volumes of these papers.[11] The volume entitled *Proceedings—1837-38*, contains only stray circular orders issued by the *Sadr Faujdari Adalat* of the Lower Provinces of Bengal and certain stray correspondence and reports on the proposed draft Act relative to the recision of Section 23, Regulation 28 of 1802, the Madras Code, vesting *Tahsildars* with the powers of the Commissioners for the sale of distrained property. The second volume entitled *Proceedings of the Indian Law Commissioners—1844-47* (Home Miscellaneous, No. in the List, 520) contains only a brief indication of the transactions of the Commission with the orders issued and resolutions passed. The third volume entitled *Law Commission: Index to Proceedings—1835-45* is, of the three, the most useful document. It is not clear at what time the index was originally prepared, but the entries cover the period from 1835 to March 1848. The first part of the document contains a chronologically arranged list of subjects that were considered, references to communications received and sent out, and a succinct account of the nature of the reference and the progress made in respect of each subject. The second part of the document is a subject index giving the same particulars as the above under suitable headings and sub-headings. The document is more in the nature of a calendar than of an index proper and gives a clear picture of the transactions of the Commission. Its value is, however, greatly reduced by the absence of the proceedings of the Commission and the connected papers. But the references to communications received and sent out that we find in the index

[10] Sir George Claus Rankin, *Background to Indian Law* (1946), p. 21.
[11] *A Hand-Book to the Records of the Government of India in the Imperial Record Department, 1748 to 1859*, pp. 42 & 140.

volume are of great help in tracing the relevant papers from other records preserved in the National Archives of India and elsewhere.

In the absence of the original papers of the Commission the proceedings of the Governor-General in Council form our primary source of information. At first matters relating to establishment and general subjects connected with the Commission were dealt with in the Judicial Department on the civil side, *e.g.* the appointment of Macaulay as the President of the Commission. Other matters were dealt with in the concerned departments dealing with the subject under consideration. For instance, while the Judicial Department on the civil side issued instructions to the Commission to examine and report on the subject of the Europeans holding lands, the Judicial Department on the criminal side issued the well-known instructions to frame a criminal code for the whole of the Indian Empire including all classes of persons. With the establishment of a separate Legislative Department by a resolution of the Council on 15 June 1835, matters relating to the Commission came to be dealt with in that Department. The reports of the Commission are to be found among the Parliamentary Papers which are published, but the proceedings of the Legislative Department contain a lot of valuable additional information giving a full background of the circumstances that led to the references made to the Commission and also the reception that the Commission's reports had at the hands of the Council. Of the various subjects on which the Commission reported may be mentioned the following: the penal code, the *lex loci,* slavery, civil judicature in the Presidency towns, the training of civil servants for judicial offices, the amenability of Europeans to criminal law administered in the *mofussil,* and the Articles of War for the Company's Indian troops. The Legislative Proceedings also contain a lot of interesting material concerning what may be called institutional matters: the principles to be followed in the selection and appointment of the members of the Commission; the controversy over the question of the expediency of appointing the Fourth Member of the Council as the President of the Commission following the disinclination of Amos, the incumbent Fourth Member, to accept that office; the controversy over the general policy of the Commission and its usefulness; and the surreptitious burial given to the Commission despite the express statutory provision that there shall be a Commission.

S. V. Desika Char

THE TWENTY-NINTH SESSION OF THE INDIAN HISTORICAL RECORDS COMMISSION

THE TWENTY-NINTH session of the Indian Historical Records Commission was held at Bhopal on 10-11 February, 1953. This was the first meeting of the Commission after its recent reconstitution by the Government of India and was attended by about forty members representing various State Governments, Universities and learned institutions. Dr. S. S. Bhatnagar, Educational Adviser to the Government of India, presided in the unavoidable absence of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Union Minister for Education and *ex-officio* President of the Commission.

Inaugural Meeting

The inaugural meeting commenced on the morning of 10 February after those present had observed two minutes' silence as a mark of respect to the memory of the late Mr. Gopalaswamy Ayyangar, Union Minister for Defence, the sad news of whose death came to Bhopal a short time before the session was scheduled to be inaugurated.

In his inaugural address, Mr. Bhagwan Sahay, Chief Commissioner of Bhopal, stressed the need for historical research to explore and establish facts in each period of time, to discern their significance and weave them into a pattern with a view to discovering the motivating influences and tendencies in the society and the individual without which no proper planning could be done. He added, "Whatever ideologies we adopt and whatever social patterns we nationally accept for ourselves, we cannot be sure that the human element would adequately and truly respond. And if there is conflict and tension between the human element and the social pattern which we have nationally adopted our progress is bound to be impeded." The most important function of an ideology, he said, was to hold society together, to facilitate its operation and to promote its progress. It was, therefore, necessary for planners to evolve an ideology for society in terms of experience of the past. "In the absence of such an effort we run the grave risk of its breakdown by stresses and tensions within the structure of the society itself."

Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, Chief Minister of Bhopal and Chairman of the Reception Committee, extended a hearty welcome to the members of the Commission on behalf of the people of the State. In the course of his short address he spoke of the glorious past of the territory of the State and referred to a line of four eminent women rulers who shaped the

destiny of Bhopal in the nineteenth century. Speaking of the old records of the Bhopal administration available in the Central Records Office and other allied Departments of the State, he claimed that their exhaustive examination would "add some interesting pages to the history of India."

Dr. Bhatnagar's presidential address was devoted to several pressing problems relating to historical research and archival work in the country. In its opening part he discussed at some length the role of historical studies. "History" he said, "provides a basis for laying down programmes for future development. It can no longer rest content with being a mere narrative of events in different periods in the life of a nation, of battles lost and won or invasions warded off. To fulfil its real function, history must present a complete and composite picture of the achievements of a nation's existence, depicting in continuity her rise and fall, the doings of her inhabitants, their methods of working and the standards of their attainments."

Dr. Bhatnagar reviewed the progress of work done at the National Archives during the past year in regard to the administration and preservation of records, preparation of reference media and publication of historical materials. In his survey of the achievements of the Record Offices of the States he praised highly the Madras Record Office and said that it was the "envy of all State Archivists in regard to the richness of its collections and their scientific maintenance." He wished that other states would also establish such repositories and make available a detailed record of their work to the present and future generations of historians. Proceeding, he said, "The useful role of a Central Record Office where all the non-current records can be kept, well-indexed and maintained, hardly needs stressing, and the establishment of a network of archival repositories at all levels of activities in different parts of the country is an urgent necessity. Even local bodies like municipalities and district boards can help in this national task by proper maintenance of their records. These furnish a picture of local conditions and happenings while the State and Central records give an idea of the composite picture of different regions and the country as a whole."

Dr. Bhatnagar also laid great emphasis on the importance of private archives and said that due to the sheer ignorance of their value and consequent negligence there was rapid destruction of private archives and only a small portion was properly taken care of. He called upon the members of the Commission and the Regional Survey Committees to intensify the campaign for saving these valuable raw materials on which historians could base their studies. He also drew the attention of the Commission to the value of business archives which were being lost because of the apathy

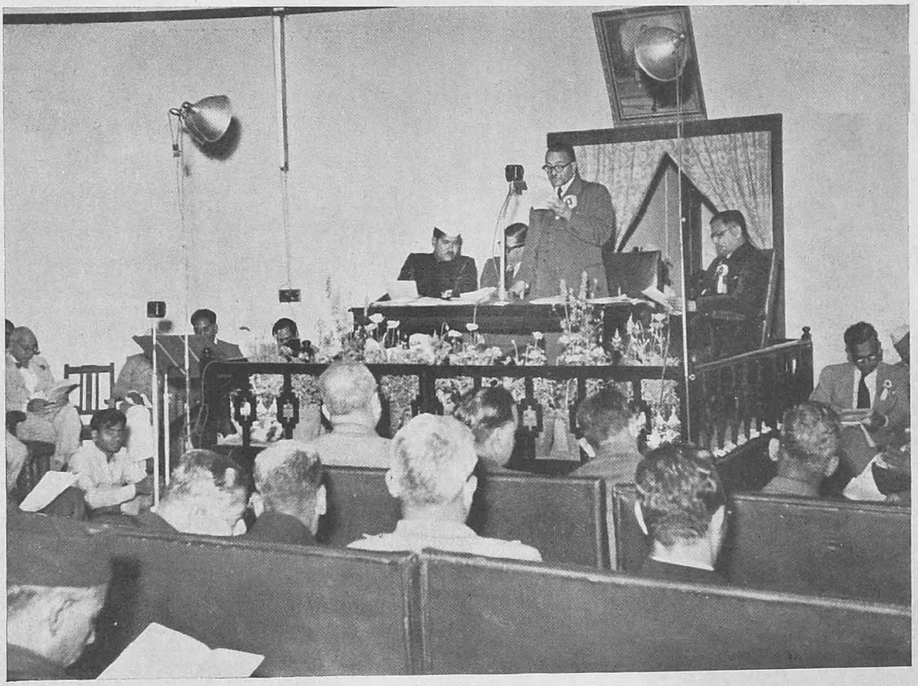
of their owners as well as of historians. He aptly remarked, "The slow but steady pace of industrialization, particularly during the last half century, has undoubtedly influenced our social and economic structure and is materially re-orienting our outlook on life. Public archives alone cannot furnish a full picture of these changes and for a thorough understanding of the causes and a full appreciation of their effects, systematic study of the records of industrial firms and business houses will be of considerable value."

The President's address was followed by the reading of papers on different aspects of modern Indian history and their source materials. Professor S. H. Askari described a newly discovered manuscript of Inayatullah's *Ahkam-i-Alamgiri* which is regarded as a primary source of Aurangzeb's reign and discussed its historical importance particularly in regard to such of its contents which have not hitherto received proper attention.

Dr. P. M. Joshi's paper on "Food Scarcity in Bombay Island, 1737-1739: A side issue of the Maratha Campaign against Bassein" evoked great interest, particularly for the measures adopted by Governor Horne to overcome the food shortage in the island. During the Maratha campaign against Bassein the British authorities in Bombay drew the wrath of the Marathas who stopped the supply of food grains to Bombay. Many people from Salsette took shelter there and added to the anxiety of the administration of the island regarding the adequacy of food grains. The authorities took the extreme step of issuing a proclamation requiring refugees to quit the island and all the inhabitants were required to communicate to the heads of their respective castes the quantity of rice and other food grains in their possession. Attempts were also made to import rice into Bombay from Mangalore, Surat and Bengal.

Dr. K. K. Datta discussed "An Old Village Survey Report" dated 1825 which provides evidence regarding self-sufficient organization of villages in Bihar even at that late date. A glimpse of the state of education in Assam in the first half of the 19th century was given in the paper read by Dr. H. K. Barpujari on "Documents relating to the History of Education in Assam in the days of the Company."

Dr. Hira Lal Gupta read a paper on the "Rebellion of Man Singh Rao Patankar", an ambitious and turbulent Jagirdar of the State of Gwalior, and discussed the measures adopted by the State authorities and the British Government for its suppression. The rebellion gives an insight into the British policy towards Indian States and throws light on the important question of succession that engaged the attention of the State before as well as after the death of Daulat Rao Sindhia.



Dr. S. S. Bhatnagar delivering his presidential address at the 29th Session of the Indian Historical Records Commission held at Bhopal.

Visitors looking at the exhibits dealing with the evolution of education at the Exhibition of records, historical manuscripts and paintings.

Dr. S. P. Sen contributed an interesting paper on the "Diplomatic Intrigues of Chevalier, Governor of Chandernagore, 1767-1778". Chevalier, who was a colourful personality with an unlimited optimism and a blind patriotism, kept himself in constant touch with the princes of North India and the French military adventurers scattered all over the country and intrigued at every darbar. He never doubted for a moment that it was possible for France even after the end of the Seven Years' War to drive the English out of Bengal with the help of some of the Indian princes. Dr. Sen's paper contained a lucid account of these intrigues and showed how ultimately Chevalier failed to realize his hopes of restoration of French influence in India with the sudden outbreak of war between France and England in 1778 and the prompt capture of Chandernagore by the English authorities.

Mr. V. S. Suri discussed the historical importance of the manuscripts of Moulvi Rajab Ali who played an important role in the field of Anglo-Sikh relations both before and after the annexation of the Punjab. Those valuable materials are now available in the Punjab Government Record Office at Simla.

The other papers which were read at the public meeting included "Exclusion of High Caste Hindus from Oudh Police after the Mutiny" by Nanda Lal Chatterjee; "The Rajendras of Gangakhed and their Records" by R. M. Joshi; "Records from a Ghatpande Family of Junnar" by G. H. Khare; "A Court Bulletin of Prince Jahandar Shah" by G. N. Saletore; "A letter of Nawab Nizam Ali Khan on Holland's Mission, 1779" by Sayyid Mohiuddin; "An agreement between Asaf-ud-Daulah of Awadh and Muzaffar Jung of Farrukhabad, 1775" by A. L. Srivastava; "Some unpublished Documents on the Rani of Jhansi and the Mutiny in Central India" by M. H. R. Taimuri; "Some Prominent Parsis in the 18th Century" by B. A. Saletore; and "Minto and Goa" by Shilendra K. Singh.

Historical Exhibition

An important feature of the Session was the organization of an exhibition of records, historical manuscripts and paintings lent by the National Archives of India, the State Archives of U. P., Punjab, Hyderabad, Bhopal, Pepsu, the Rajputana Museum at Ajmere and the Combined Inter-Services Historical Section, Ministry of Defence, Government of India. The exhibition was opened by Mrs. Bhagwan Sahay, wife of the Chief Commissioner of Bhopal, on the evening of 10 February. The exhibits were well arranged and won the admiration of those who had occasion to see them.

Among the records of the National Archives of India displayed there

were several documents relating to the modern history of Bhopal State, beginning from 1778. A group of thirty-one records served to illustrate some of the salient features of the history of Education in India from 1781 to 1920. The other items included select records in oriental languages, significant for their calligraphy, and specimens of records repair work done at the National Archives of India.

The exhibits from the Punjab Government Record Office and Archives of Pepsu included several historical manuscripts in Persian relating to the history of the Punjab and the adjacent territories. A group of letters from Bhawani Prasad to Nawab Sikandar Begam, recently found among the collections of the Central Records Office, Bhopal, relating to the death of the Rani of Jhansi and the Mutiny in Malwa, were also displayed at the exhibition. The exhibits from the Combined Inter-Services Historical Section, including some original records of World War II, drew the special attention of the visitors.

Members' Annual Meeting

The Annual Members' Meeting of the Commission was held on the morning of 11 February with Dr. Bhatnagar in the Chair. The proceedings began with a resolution of condolence on the death of Professor J. C. Taluqdar of St. John's College, Agra, and Lt. Col. J. L. Treloar, Director of the Australian War Memorial and Archival Authority for Service Departments, both of whom were associated with the Indian Historical Records Commission for a long time. Professor Taluqdar represented the University of Agra on the Commission from 1942 to 1952 and was an active member of the Uttar Pradesh Regional Records Survey Committee. He was also Honorary Editor of Volume XIV of the *Fort William—India House Correspondence*, which is being published by the National Archives of India. Lt. Col. Treloar was a Corresponding Member of the Commission from 1947.

The Commission made a number of recommendations relating to archival work in India. The proposal for appointment of a committee of specialists to study the problem of protection of archives and other cultural properties during periods of armed conflict received the unanimous support of the members. The Commission felt that international conventions even if signed by many nations could not afford complete protection and immunity in the midst of a total war. It was of opinion that planning for protection of cultural properties, particularly archives, because of their unique character, should be regarded as a peacetime job. The Commission, on a motion of Dr. R. R. Sethi, resolved to request the Government of India

"to set up a Committee of experts representing archives, library and museum interests to study the problem of protection of cultural properties during periods of war and to suggest measures for affording them maximum security."

By another resolution, moved by Dr. R. C. Majumdar, the Commission urged the Government of India to take steps to microfilm the records of historical importance at Goa and so make them available to research students in India. The Commission also called upon the Union and State Governments to allow free exchange of record office publications in India, as earlier recommended by the Commission in Resolution XII of the Tenth Session held at Rangoon in 1927. The Commission nominated the Secretary, Dr. B. A. Saletore, to represent it at the Second International Congress of Archivists to be held at The Hague in June 1953. Dr. Saletore was also nominated as the Commission's representative on the Education Sub-Commission of the Indian National Commission for Co-operation with the UNESCO.

The meeting concluded with a vote of thanks to the Government of Bhopal for the excellent arrangements made at the Session.

Twentieth Meeting of the Research and Publication Committee

The Research and Publication Committee held its twentieth meeting on 11 February at Bhopal with Dr. S. S. Bhatnagar in the Chair. The Committee reviewed the progress of the publication programme of the National Archives of India and appointed a Sub-Committee, consisting of Dr. R. C. Majumdar, Shri G. S. Sardesai and the Director of Archives, Government of India, to suggest measures for expediting the work on the twenty-one volumes of the *Fort William—India House Correspondence.*

The Committee unanimously accepted the resolution moved by Dr. P. M. Joshi recommending the compilation of a "Hand-Book of Indian Archival Repositories" and urged the State Governments to co-operate with the Commission by supplying full information about their records for inclusion in the proposed Hand-Book. The Committee also recommended the compilation and periodical publication of a comprehensive list of the research works on modern Indian history done in India.

The proposal for the compilation of a National Register of Records and Historical Manuscripts found an important place in the deliberations of the Committee. It called upon the Government of India to take immediate steps for the implementation of the scheme which had been accepted in principle some years ago by the Government. On a proposal of Dr. K. K. Datta, the Committee resolved "that the Government of India and the

State Governments be requested to take suitable steps at an early date for collection and preservation, at a central place, of the old historical records of the Zemindaries now brought under Government control."

The Committee evinced keen interest in the scheme for the compilation of the History of the Freedom Movement in India and recommended that the Regional Records Survey Committees be closely associated with the project. It also called upon the Regional Committees to expedite the collection of materials for the proposed History.

NEWS NOTES

INDIA

National Archives of India

The Master of the Mint, Government of India, has recently transferred to the National Archives of India a valuable accumulation of 100 volumes of the records of the Mint Committee from 1792 to 1896. These records contain useful details regarding the coinage policy of the Government, methods of coining, tools used for coining, supply of coins to different colonies, establishment of mints at different places in India, etc. The records of the late Gujarat and Western India States Agency for the period 1863-1947 have been transferred to the Department's custody and are being checked and arranged. A further consignment of 20 boxes of records of the late Central India Agency for the years 1828-1947 has also been received. Another valuable group of archives accessioned recently is the records of the Public Branch of the Home Department for the years 1943-47. The Ministry of Home Affairs will also be sending to the National Archives a further consignment of 150 bundles of their records for 1900-47.

The Department has acquired a bound set of the Finance and Revenue Accounts of the Government of India from 1860-61 to 1935-36, incorporating also the "Home Accounts of the Secretary of State in Council." These accounts are of great value because the scope of the reports of the Auditor of Accounts of the Secretary of State in Council was much wider than that to which the audit reports of the present day are limited. They were in the nature of expository reviews of all the major items of sterling expenditure compiled for the information of the then Imperial Parliament in the exercise of its responsibility for the government of India.

The Ministry of External Affairs has decided to transfer to the National Archives all the records of the former British Residency in Nepal, at present lying with the Indian Embassy in Khatmandu. These will be of great use for the study of Nepal's past relations with India. Another collection which the Department expects to acquire shortly consists of the old specifications and other materials from the Patent Office, Calcutta, relating to the period 1617-1900.

The Department has recently purchased some valuable manuscripts of the late Mrs. Sarojini Naidu from Mr. Alex Symington. These include the holographs of several of her poems written during 1896-1904, and, with a few exceptions, included in *The Golden Threshold,* published in 1905. This collection also includes several letters addressed by Mrs. Naidu to Sir Edmund Gosse, the famous English essayist and critic, from 1896 when she was studying at King's College, London, to 1916 when she had become well known for her poetic achievements. These letters reflect her personal relations with Gosse and show how she won his esteem and affection.

The Department continued to make additions to its collection of historical manuscripts in Persian. Among the recent acquisitions in this group are *Shigarf-nama,* a personal account of I'tisam'd-Din's journey to England as Shah Alam's envoy to the Court of George III, written in the last quarter of the eighteenth century; *Waqaya-i-Nia'mat Khan,* containing an account of Aurangzeb's conquest of the Deccan forts and Hyderabad; *Waqaya-i-Nadir-shah,* the history of the last days of Nadir Shah; *Chahar Bagh,* containing copies of 69 letters of Abul Fateh Gilani of Akbar's Court; and *Majmua-i-Ihitram Khani,* a beautifully calligraphed copy of letters and other writings of Ihitram Khan, a *mansabdar* of the reign of Aurangzab.

Considerable progress has been made with the microfilming of the Dutch East India Company's records at present in the custody of the Algemeen Rijksarchief, The Hague. In November 1952, the Department received 53 rolls of microfilms containing copies of these records for 1677-93. Arrangements have also been made for microcopying of the records for 1693-1700; the National Archives of India will thus have acquired copies of all the 17th century records of the Dutch Company relating to India. The Department has also received five rolls of microfilms, containing copies of about 6,000 manuscript pages of important materials on Indian history in the Nouvelle Acquisitions Series in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris. Among them are copies of correspondence of Bernard Picot de la Motte, the Governor of Mahé with several French and foreign agents in the factories and forts in India and China during 1760-80; the correspondence of the Governor and the Council at Mahé with the French East India Company (1765-73); and de la Motte's correspondence with some persons in Europe (1765-78) and with the Governors of Pondicherry (1774-78). It is also proposed to expand the microfilm acquisition programme of the Department so as to include historical materials available in public repositories and private collections in India with the object of building up at the National Archives a central repository where all material pertaining to modern Indian history will be available.

One Year's Diploma Course in Archive-Keeping commenced on 1 October 1952 with seven students coming from different parts of the country. The Three Months' Short Course of Training, offered twice a year, continues to draw a large number of trainees from the Departments of the Government of India as well as State Governments.

The Director of Archives, Government of India, inspected in November 1952 the Central Government records in the custody of the State Governments of Madhya Pradesh and Hyderabad. In April 1953 he paid a visit to Trivandrum to inspect the Government of India's records in the custody of the Government of Travancore and Cochin. He also inspected the Cochin Record Office at Ernakulam in pursuance of a recommendation of the Research & Publication Committee of the Indian Historical Records Commission made at its meeting held at Jaipur in December 1951.

Every effort is being made to expedite the publication of the volumes in the *Fort William—India House Correspondence* Series. Vol. I, edited by

Dr. K. K. Datta, is now in the press and about half of it has been set in type. Four more volumes in the Series are now ready for the press. The compilation of *Calendar of Persian Correspondence*, Vol. X (1792-93) has been completed and it is expected to be sent to the press shortly.

Dr. S. Gopal, M.A., D.Phil. (Oxon.), has been appointed Assistant Director of Archives (Publications). He assumed charge of his duties on 31 July 1952. Mr. T. S. Bhatia, who came to the Department in February 1952 as Assistant Director of Archives (Administration) left in August to take up a post of Assistant Secretary in the Ministry of Education.

The Punjab Government Record Office, Simla

The Punjab Government Record Office is continuing its efforts to salvage non-current records of permanent value from the district and divisional headquarters. In November 1952, the Keeper of Records visited the Office of the Commissioner of Ambala Division and after a systematic survey of old records selected important materials for transfer to the Central repository at Simla. The Ambala Division is the oldest in the State and some of the salvaged records date back to 1803. Among them are also records of the former Delhi Division and Delhi and Hissar Division. These materials are of great value for the study of the expansion and consolidation of the British power in northern India and its political relations with the Cis-Sutlej and Trans-Sutlej chiefs in the 19th century.

Directorate of Archives and Museum of Pepsu, Patiala

The records of the Patiala and East Punjab States Union, comprising over nine lacs of files and registers, are still housed in different rooms of Qila Mubarik at Patiala because the archives building has not yet been completed. These records will be centred in one place as soon as the stack area of the new building is completed.

Among the principal additions to the records holdings of the Directorate during 1951-52 were 2,058 files of the Education and Health Department, 3,602 of the Law Department and 1,060 of the Home Department.

The Publication Programme of the Department is making good progress and the volume on the *Bibliography of Pepsu* is now ready for the press. Among the other projected publications of the Department, the most important are *History of the Freedom Movement in the Patiala Union* and *Hand-book of the Patiala Union Records.*

Committee on Records in Rajasthan

The Government of India in consultation with the Government of Rajasthan have appointed a Committee to survey old records lying in the various parts of Rajasthan with the object of preserving for posterity the

materials of historical importance among them. The Committee will examine not only the Persian records which are available in abundance but also records in Hindi, Rajasthani and English. The scope of the survey will extend to records in public as well as private custody. The Committee will also examine and report on old paintings in Rajasthan.

The Committee consists of Mr. Jainarain Vyas, Chief Minister of Rajasthan (Chairman); Mr. Nathuram Mirdha, Education Minister, Rajasthan; Prof. Sita Ram Kohli; Dr. B. A. Saletore, Director of Archives, Government of India; Mr. J. K. Roy, Superintendent, Central Asian Antiquities Museum, New Delhi and Dr. M. L. Sharma, Director of Archives, Government of Rajasthan (Convener). It is expected that the Committee will start its work very shortly and its findings will be of great help in organizing a Central Records Office in Rajasthan and for the proper preservation of the invaluable materials on Indian history available there.

Central Record Office, Allahabad

The plans for the centralization of non-current records of Uttar Pradesh and their scientific preservation at the Central Record Office, Allahabad, are making a steady headway. Among the old records transferred to the Office are archives formerly kept in the Office of the Board of Revenue, consisting of two main groups: (*i*) North West Province Records comprising nearly 2,000 volumes and covering the period 1807-58; and (*ii*) Oudh Records in 6 volumes and 10,768 files covering correspondence for 1858-90. These papers contain valuable materials for the study of the development of the administration of the province in the 19th century and other aspects of its history. The Record Office is also the recipient of the original correspondence of the Commissioner of Rohilkhand Division, 1860-80. Among the significant Persian manuscripts acquired by the Office are three Mughal *farmans,* two of which were issued under the authority of Emperor Aurangzeb.

The Office has made substantial progress in the compilation of reference media. Catalogues have been prepared of the pre-Mutiny district records of Agra (1807-57), Aligarh (1836-56), Etawah (1821-47), Farrukhabad (1819-58), Fatehpur (1843-57), Mainpuri (1857-58) and Meerut (1822-34), and the catalogue of Benares records (1795-1859) is under preparation. Check-lists of all the North West Province Records, Oudh Records and Correspondence of the Rohilkhand Commissioner, recently transferred to the Office, have been compiled. The Office has also calendared 561 Persian documents, dating from early 17th century to the Mutiny, and arrangements for their publication in one volume are in hand. The indexing of the Revenue Records (1803-7) is progressing.

The lack of a suitable functional building and sufficient stacking equipment explains to a large extent the slow progress of the Central Record Office in regard to accessioning of records.

Record Department, West Bengal

The old records of the Government of West Bengal continue to be housed at Berhampur due to the non-availability of suitable accommodation in Calcutta. The administrative control over the State's records has now been transferred from the Home Department to the Education Department of the State Government.

Assam Government Records

Information has been received from the Government of Assam that records relating to the North East Frontier Agency, which were in the custody of the State Government, have been taken over by the North East Frontier Administration for political reasons. These records are now located in the Office of the Adviser to the Governor of Assam.

The records of Manipur State pertaining to the relations between the State and the Crown Representative have also been transferred to the Adviser to the Governor of Assam.

Central Records Office, Hyderabad

The rapidly increasing record collections in the Office have been further augmented by large accessions of non-current records during the past two years. In 1951-52 the Office received for custody 109,013 files from the Secretariat; and during the preceding year the accessions included 223,980 files, 1,208 bags containing thousands of files and 1,794 registers and books. These records were thoroughly checked and the papers of ephemeral interest weeded out.

It is gratifying to learn that Volume I of the *Poona Akhbars,* a collection of newsletters written by the Nizam's Agent at Poona, has been published. The publication contains the text in Nagari script, summaries in English, a glossary of obsolete or difficult terms and an index. A volume of Mughal documents entitled *Waqai-Alamgiri,* containing news-reports from Hyderabad, Aurangabad, Berar etc., is now ready for the press. Among the volumes under preparation are the *Chronology of Modern Hyderabad, Newsletters and Court Bulletins, 1762-1911,* and the *Deccan Calendars from 1817 to 1878.*

Mr. Syed Ali of the Hyderabad Civil Service has left the Central Records Office. He has been succeeded as Director by Raja Triambak Raj. Dr. Yusuf Hussain Khan, Professor of History, Osmania University, is serving the Office as Adviser to the Persian Section.

Madras Record Office, Madras

The Tanjore Raj Records, the custody of which was taken over by the Madras Record Office a couple of years ago, are now being sorted, listed and

classified by a special staff with a view to making them available for historical research. It is proposed to weed out the useless papers among them and prepare a catalogue of the documents to be preserved permanently.

The Electoral Rolls of the Parliamentary and Assembly Constituencies of Madras State prepared under the new Constitution have been deposited in the Record Office. The transfer of the Register Books and Indexes of the Registration Department relating to the documents registered under Regulation XVI of 1802 has been completed and a descriptive list of these records is under preparation. All the books and periodicals registered under the Registration of Books Act of 1867, which were so far kept in the Office of the Registrar of Books, Madras, have also been transferred to the Madras Record Office for safe custody and preservation.

The *Catalogue of the Danish Records* and the *Supplementary Catalogue of the Dutch Records* form the latest publications of the Office. The pressure of work in the Madras Government Press continues to stand in the way of publication *in extenso* of a large number of volumes in the *Records of the Fort St. George* Series of the period 1751-65, which have been edited and are ready for being sent to the printer. The Office is also bringing out several volumes of *Mayor's Court Records.*

The scope of the publication activities of the Madras Record Office has been expanded by the inclusion in it of the reprinting of the District Gazetteers and Manuals. *The Malabar Manual,* Vols. I-III and the *Malabar District Gazetteer,* Vol. I, have been reprinted under this scheme.

INTERNATIONAL

UNESCO—Meeting of Experts on Microfilm Readers

A conference of experts on microfilm readers arranged by the International Organization for Standards in co-operation with UNESCO will be held in Paris during 1-4 July, with the object of facilitating the standardization of microfilm reading devices. The purposes of standardization will be (*i*) to facilitate the corresponding operations for the user ; and (*ii*) to furnish the user and maker with a common language for use in connection with the operations.

The quality of the image on a microfilm reader is dependent not only on the characteristics of the reading machine but also upon those of the microfilm studied. In endeavouring to ascertain the quality of the reader it is essential to eliminate the variable factor, "quality of microfilm", by subjecting a *standard reference microfilm* to reading. The conference will consider a proposal for an 'I.S.O. Test Micro-object' (or *Micromire*). In regard to reading apparatus the experts will discuss the problem of having a universal reader capable of giving an image from microfilms on either an opaque or a transparent base. If it is confirmed that the universal reader

is not a practical device the conference will consider the desirability of having polyvalent readers for giving images of quality of each form of transparent microfilm.

The deliberations of the conference are expected to be very useful to the users as well as to the producers of microfilm materials.

UNITED KINGDOM

Public Record Office, London

The Public Record Office, London, has succeeded in solving the problem of shortage of accommodation caused by the growing accumulations of public records. According to the *113th Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Records,* the Department was able to enter into partial occupation of the new repositories both at Hayes and at Ashridge Park in 1951. The repository at Hayes has been set up to take records at an intermediate stage which are either to be destroyed under schedule or to be selected for permanent retention at the Public Record Office. The Ashridge repository, on the other hand, will serve as a branch repository to relieve pressure on the accommodation at Chancery Lane. It will provide 150,000 foot-run of shelving, sufficient to meet the immediate requirements of the PRO and its needs for some years to come.

With the establishment of the Ashridge repository it has become possible for the Department to accept for custody a larger number of records. During 1951 the Foreign Office transferred *Correspondence, Great Britain* and *General* for the period 1897-1930 and *Embassy and Consular Archives* from nine countries. The Department also received 228 bundles of photographic copies of German Foreign Ministry documents of 1814-1923. Other important Departmental transmissions included the *Poor Law Union Papers* (1834-1900) from the Ministry of Health and *Ministry of Production Records* (1936-46) from the Board of Trade.

The record publications of the Department during 1951 included *Acts of the Privy Council,* Vol. XLIII ; *Calendar of State Papers, Foreign, Elizabeth,* Vol. XXIII ; *Curia, Regis Rolls,* Vol. X and *Calendar of Treasury Books* Vol. XXIII (Part I). An illustrated *Guide to Seals in the Public Record Office* is to be published shortly.

The recent decline in the volume of editing work is largely due to the increasing employment of the staff in work of administrative character which has grown with the rapid accumulations of records, especially departmental records. Attempts are being made to compensate for the loss by the engagement of additional staff, employment of the services of outside editors and co-operation with foreign institutions to bring out important record publications. The Department is also devising more economical methods of publication and the most significant step in this direction is the new form of the *Descriptive List of State Papers, Foreign* from 1589 devised after many

experiments by the Editor, Professor R. B. Wernham. This descriptive list will comprise: (1) list of the *State Papers* arranged as in the old *Foreign Calendar* in chronological order, but giving a much briefer account of the contents of each paper; and (2) an index, not to the list, but to manuscripts themselves. The aim of the new list, according to Prof. Wernham, is to provide a guide to the original *State Papers,* not a substitute for them; to give a handy summary of their contents, together with a thorough index of the subjects, persons, and places referred to in them. The index is an index to the manuscripts and not to the descriptions of them in the *List* though references are to the numbers of entries in the list.

An important change has taken place in the Department by the reorganization of the former composite class of "Attendants and Repairers" into three distinct divisions, a step necessitated by the varied range of the duties of the staff at this level and the advantages of specialization in each field. The three separate categories, each with its own grade, are Repairing, Photography and Production and Search Room duties.

The Photographic Section of the PRO has been strengthened by the creation of a new post of Principal Photographer. In view of the growing scope and complexity of the work further expansion of the section is expected.

Grigg Committee on Departmental Records

A Committee has been appointed jointly by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Master of the Rolls to deal with the problem created by the rapid growth of government records destined to be transferred to the Public Record Office. Sir James Grigg is the Chairman of the Committee and its other members are Mr. Denys Buckley, Mr. S. P. Chambers, Mr. C. R. Creswick, Professor J. G. Edwards, Mrs. M. M. Gowing, Professor H. J. Habakkuk and Mr. K. H. Clucas (Secretary). The Committee will review the arrangements for the preservation of records of the government departments (other than the records of the Scottish Departments and the records transmissible to the Keeper of the Records of Scotland) in the light of the rate at which they are being created and the purpose they are intended to serve. It will recommend, if required, changes in law and practice in regard to the public records.

The Committee has started its work and it is expected that its report will lead to important changes in the administration of modern departmental records in the United Kingdom.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

National Archives and Records Service

The three great charters of American independence—the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States and the Bill of Rights—

were formally enshrined on 15 December 1952 in the Exhibition Hall of the National Archives. Chief Justice Fred Vinson presided at the ceremony. To provide safe storage for these documents when they are on display or in case of an emergency, a fireproof and bombproof vault has been built twenty feet below the shrine. An electrically operated device has also been installed which is capable of lowering the documents, along with their supports, into the vault and closing the massive lid at a moment's notice. The documents, having been sealed in helium by the National Bureau of Standards, are fully protected from harmful dust, moisture, heat and chemicals in the atmosphere. To protect them from the deleterious effect of light, special filters have been installed in the glass covers of the shrines and the spotlights that illuminate them.

A new Federal Records Centre has been established in the General Services Administration Region 1 at Boston. This brings the number of such regional centres to eight. The administration of the records centres since their inception have shown significant economies in the management of the Federal Government's records. During the period of two years ending 30 June 1952, Federal Records Centres have received 1.4 million cubic feet of records from Federal agencies and have helped to dispose of about 100,000 cubic feet of valueless records. This has resulted in making available for other purposes 454,000 square feet of office space, 896,000 feet of storage space, 59,000 filing cabinets and 83,000 transfer cases. It is estimated that savings in rental value of space released alone amounts to $2,260,000. The value of the released cabinets and transfer cases amounts to $3,365,500.

The National Archives has recently published *Historical Editing* by Clarence E. Carter, which contains a general discussion of the problems and methods of editing of historical documents. A review of the publication will appear in the next issue of *The Indian Archives.*

Library of Congress, Washington

Mr. Cordell Hull has presented to the Library of Congress his private papers, consisting of about 33,000 items, dating from 1910 to 1950. The collection includes papers relating to his twelve years' service as Secretary of State. The Hull collection is the twenty-fourth of the collections in the Library of Congress of the papers of former Secretaries of State. The title to the papers of General John J. Pershing has been formally transferred to the Library by the executors of his estate. These papers contain nearly 147,000 pieces relating to every major phase of Pershing's long and distinguished career. Mrs. Woodrow Wilson has presented about 10,000 pieces of her husband's personal papers to the Library, thus making a substantial addition to the main body of Wilson Papers already housed there.

The first instalment of materials relating to the late Sigmund Freud was deposited in July 1952 by the *Sigmund Freud Archives,* a corporation

organized to collect all possible materials pertaining to Freud's life and work for preparation of a biography of the Austrian psycho-analyst and teacher. Other recent accessions of manuscripts include the papers of the late Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes, of Owen Wister, the famous author, of Newton D. Baker; the latter collection covering his public career from 1916 to his death in 1937. Four volumes of the papers of Francis, Baron Howard of Effingham (1643-95), covering the years that he spent in Virginia as Governor of the royal province, have been deposited in the Library for consultation.

The five hundredth birthday of a noble manuscript, the *Giant Bible of Mainz*, which Lessing J. Rosenwald had recently presented to the Library of Congress, was celebrated by the Library in a fitting manner. This outstanding manuscript written on vellum of extraordinary texture is nearly two feet long and over thirty inches wide when the facing pages are opened. The Gothic lettering in the manuscript, all the work of a single individual, is of great beauty and about a dozen illuminated pages are also of great interest. Another important feature of the manuscript is its freshness and it does not appear to have been ever used during its life of five hundred years.

The acquisition by the Library of cartographic materials during 1 May 1951—30 April 1952 totalled 3.4 times the volume received during the preceding twelve months. The Map Division has accessioned 164,180 maps, and 1,480 atlases which help to fill the lacunae in the Division's comprehensive holdings of cartographic materials.

Truman Memorial Library

Following the example of his illustrious predecessor, former President Harry S. Truman has decided to establish a library for housing his private papers and the correspondence of Mrs. Truman. The Library is proposed to be located at Truman's home farm at Grandview, Missouri, and will be similar in scope to the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library at Hyde Park, N.Y.

Committee for the Protection of Cultural and Scientific Resources

The Committee for the Protection of Cultural and Scientific Resources, which came into existence early in 1952 as a result of the expansion of the membership of the 'Joint Committee on the Safeguarding of Library Materials in an Emergency', is an independent non-governmental organization composed of representatives from professional associations which have a primary interest in the protection from loss by war or other hazards of the materials of social, scientific and technical progress, of scholarship and of American cultural heritage. The associations participating in the work of the Committee represent libraries, archives, museums and art galleries, and national research councils. The Committee has a twofold purpose: (1) the preparation of overall plans for the protection from the hazards of bombing, fire, and civil disturbances of existing collections of materials essential to the intellectual

and cultural existence of the nation; and (2) the stimulation of plans providing for the continuance under abnormal conditions of functions performed by institutions, where interruption or discontinuance might seriously cripple the country's ability to mobilize and utilize its resources following attack.

It is the Committee's primary function to assist all organizations and institutions concerned in the co-operative or individual planning of protective measures. It functions as an advisory body, gathering, digesting and disseminating information to assist individuals, organizations, institutions, and federal agencies in their planning. In furtherance of its objects, the Committee will work in co-operation with the National Security Resources Board and the Federal Civil Defence Administration and will also maintain close liaison with other interested government agencies including the General Services Administration, the Library of Congress, the National Archives and Records Service, the Smithsonian Institution, the National Science Foundation and the Inter-departmental Committee for Scientific Research and Development. The purpose of this liaison is to provide policy and operation co-ordination with governmental activities in this field. The Committee urges the establishment of regional, state and local committees for the protection of materials of cultural, scientific and historical importance. The Committee is also preparing a manual for the guidance of local groups in meeting specific protection problems and, in addition, will disseminate information relevant to local and regional planning.

Dr. Burton W. Adkinson of the Library of Congress is the Chairman of the Committee.

BOOK REVIEWS

Selections from the Orme Manuscripts, edited by C. S. Srinivasachariar. Annamalai University Publication. (Annamalainagar, 1952; pp. xxv + 394; price Rs. 15/-).

FOR an accurate and impartial interpretation of history, a historian must have not only ability to interpret events in their proper perspective and to describe them in succinct and lucid language, but also authentic source material at his disposal,—source material which among other things must consist of public documents as well as accounts that are obtained from eye-witnesses or those who were the principal participants in the field of action. The latter class of material, usually termed as historical manuscripts, can in a great measure supplement the official documents which at best only mean an official view of things. Given these twin sources of information, a critical and balanced mind can distinguish fact from fiction and arrive at unbiassed conclusions. Robert Orme, described by Macaulay as "inferior to no English historian in style and power of painting...", but accused of being "minute even to tediousness" or "defuse even to prolixity", was famous for his search for information and accuracy in the matter of historical detail. To write his *History of the Military Transactions of the British Nation in Indostan,* he began to collect materials early in life, regardless of labour or expense. His position as a member of Madras Council gave him access to all the official correspondence. To this he added pen pictures, correspondence and other accounts sent to him by those servants of the East India Company who had served or were actually serving in the field. Outstanding among those who assisted Orme thus, were Dalton, Clive, Call, Lawrence, Wilson and many others.

It would be interesting to peep into these basic sources of our historian, the use of which made him produce a book which was acclaimed as a "monument of accuracy and impartiality".

The present volume consists of copies of selected documents, obtained by the Imperial Record Department (now the National Archives of India) from the India Office, on affairs bearing on the Anglo-French conflict on the Coromandel Coast during the years 1746-54. Excerpts from most of the important Orme Manuscripts referring to Bengal were reproduced by Hill in his *Bengal in 1756-57,* while those manuscripts on Madras affairs, barring a few extracts published by H. Davidson Love in *Vestiges of Old Madras,* have hitherto remained unpublished. It is a matter of gratification that the Annamalai University has compiled some of these important raw materials of South Indian history in a handy volume, thus bringing them within easy access of scholars for the first time.

Dalton's Military Journal of the Coromandel War is a very intelligible exposition of his own doings during that stirring period. A perusal of it con-

vincingly shows how closely Orme followed it while describing the exploits of that soldier in his *History*. The wealth of minute but nonetheless vivid details contained therein, prove to us that, without this subsidiary source material, the marches and retreats, attacks and defences, encampments and battles could not have been drawn with such accuracy and precision by Orme.

Orme's account of the fall of Madras to the French in 1746 appears to be insufficient and lacking in detail. This is probably due to his reliance solely on the testimony of Haliburton (reproduced in the volume), who took an active part in the defence of Fort St. David.

Dr. Wilson's graphic description of the siege of Arcot in 1751 and his narrative of the affairs and War of the Carnatic (Selections IV-X) practically cover the same period as Dalton's journal. Studied together, they give a comprehensive picture of the whole episode.

Of the other selections included in the book, mention must be made of the journal of the army under Major Stringer Lawrence whose military triumphs have not received due attention as they have been overshadowed by Clive's. Some account of his operations round Trichinopoly in 1753-54 was given by Lawrence himself in his *Narrative* but for the detailed account of his campaign, one must inevitably refer to Orme.

The introduction to the volume contributed by Professor R. Sathianathaier due to the untimely demise of Professor Srinivasachariar is apt and self-contained. There are, however, some points of criticism that must be made regarding the editorial part of the work. The notes are unduly bulky and references unnecessarily long. The editor has gone out of his way to quote long passages from Orme's *History* to show how meticulously he has adhered to the original manuscripts of Dalton and others or how Lawrence's *Narrative* corroborates facts mentioned in the selections. Secondly the authorities consulted in preparing the notes should have been cited. Thirdly the term 'Foot-note' as used in the volume is mis-applied, as the notes appear at the end of each chapter. This arrangement makes reference to the notes cumbersome because the reader is obliged to turn back and forth every time he has to make a reference. Furthermore, the arrangement of the text appears faulty, inasmuch as it is difficult to make out where the short caption appearing in the beginning of every selection ends and where the text begins. Perhaps this could have been avoided by a careful selection of types for the captions. The value of the publication could have been considerably enhanced by the inclusion of a select bibliography and an index.

The general get-up and printing of the volume leave nothing to be desired. It is a painstaking collection of factual material, invaluable for students of political developments in South India in the middle of the 18th century.

DHAN KESWANI

The Correspondence of David Scott, Director and Chairman of the East India Company relating to Indian Affairs 1787-1805. Two Volumes, edited by C. H. Philips (Royal Historical Society, London, 1951; pp. xxviii+458).

THE study of East India Company politics in London has recently come into its own; and this is to be welcomed by students of Indian history. For though it is mainly a study of the relations between Cabinets and Courts, it also throws much light on the relations between the governments in India and the home authorities. No one, for instance, who lacks knowledge of the activities of Laurence Sulivan can hope to estimate the achievements and limitations of Warren Hastings; and such another figure, dominating Company politics in the period just after, was David Scott. Along with Henry Dundas at the Board of Control and Lord Wellesley in India, he formed the triumvirate which determined India policy at the turn of the eighteenth century. His correspondence, therefore, is of inestimable value; and Professor Philips, who is the pioneer worker in this field, had whetted our appetite for them with his article in the Cuvelier Number of *The Indian Archives* (July-December 1950). And now we have the whole correspondence, gathered from various sources and edited in a model manner by Professor Philips himself, and published in two magnificent volumes by the Royal Historical Society.

David Scott was a private merchant who built up a substantial fortune during a stay of twenty-three years in and around Bombay and returned to England in 1786, clearly with regret. For we find him writing in 1798 that "I feel that wherever a man is happy there he should remain, and I never was in a country where I was more happy than in India". He seems to have taken no part in the controversies that raged round Hastings, for he succeeded in remaining on friendly terms with both Pitt and Dundas as well as with the victim of the impeachment. From 1788 to 1802 he was the most influential member of the Direction of the East India Company, and for long also a member of the House of Commons. Dundas trusted him and regarded him as his agent and adviser; and this weight of Administration in turn strengthened Scott's influence with his colleagues. At the height of his influence he was able to command the support of nearly twenty Directors, and had a clear majority in the Court. But he was by no means "the tool of the Ministry", as his enemies called him. He worked hard and long, formed his own judgments, and, as the letters show, was prepared to adhere to them even at the risk of a quarrel with Dundas and Pitt. So high, indeed, was his independent standing that in August 1801, after Scott had resigned the chairmanship, Lord Dartmouth, the President of the Board of Control, did not think it unusual to solicit his patronage for a surgeon in whom he was interested.

Thus Scott, who found no place in the Dictionary of National Biography, was, we now realise, one of the key figures in that age of 'connections' and 'management'. He had close associations with the Ministry, Parliament and the City, and his correspondence is illustrative, and often even revelatory, of

many aspects of the history of that period. We find much to corroborate what Professor Philips had already taught us about the great shipping controversy that convulsed the Court of Directors. Here also we find the naked use of Indian patronage for the benefit of relations. Five nephews of Scott as well as his son-in-law, Captain Salmond, were employed in various parts of India; the latter was Military Secretary to the Governor-General, and this close relationship provides the explanation for Wellesley's very warm recommendation of him, on his departure from India, to the Directors (*Vide* his minute of 1 November 1803. M. Martin: Despatches, Minutes etc. of Wellesley, Vol. III, p. 438). Scott even placed his patronage at the service of his Parliamentary ambitions. "You all know", he informed his constituency agent in September 1798, "my powers as to assistance, or if you are at a loss you can ask me. You can of course pledge yourselves for such being done. An ensign to be made a lieutenant is nothing. Bengal, Madras or Bombay cadets could be had." Such canvassing, then as now, did not always bring in the expected returns, and Scott was very bitter that some electors had not recompensed favours with votes.

But what will most interest readers in this country are the letters that bear on Wellesley's Governor-Generalship. These, as Professor Philips says, provide a new basis for assessing Wellesley's achievements. Scott and Wellesley had long been on intimate terms; the Ministry and Wellesley knew well, as Scott remarked, "each other's heads and hearts"; and the new Governor-General went out to India with very clear ideas as to the policies he should adopt and the hopes and intentions of Dundas and Scott. So in 1800, when Wellesley suggested that the question of the India trade should be decided in England, Dundas could legitimately complain: "The truth is I thought he would have been more decisive and have acted upon the knowledge of my opinion, trusting that what he did would be supported". In all matters, and especially in matters of foreign policy, Dundas and Scott unqualifiedly supported Wellesley. Professor Philips shows this in his Introduction with a telling quotation from one of Wellesley's letters; and there is more evidence in the correspondence. "You say" wrote Scott to Wellesley in March 1800, "you could unfold such a tale as would convince me of the necessity of war. My dear Lord, I never was convinced of a thing *more* in my life...". For Scott, indeed, "the comet of the East" could do nothing wrong; and all the complaints and censures of Jonathan Duncan, the sensitive, over-mild Governor of Bombay, of the high-handedness, intolerable vanity and "crude vapourings" of the Governor-General seem to have left Scott unshaken. It was only after the departure of Dundas from the Board of Control in 1801 and Scott's resignation from the Direction a year later that Wellesley was exposed to his enemies in England, and they took full advantage of his position. From the start Scott had encouraged the Governor-General to act against the old Shipping interest, and they now saw their chance of revenge. It can well be argued that Wellesley suffered, not only for his own actions, but also, and perhaps

to a greater extent, for having been the protégé of Dundas and Scott. This compels a fresh approach to the whole Governor-Generalship.

These letters, in fact, form source material of the highest importance. There is no issue or incident of British Indian history of these years regarding which they do not add to our knowledge, and all will be grateful to Professor Philips for assembling and publishing them.

S. Gopal

The British Overseas by C. E. Carrington (Cambridge University Press, 1950; pp. xxiii+1092; price £2-2-0).

MR. CARRINGTON has undertaken an ambitious task in attempting to write a complete and comprehensive account of the activities and achievements of the British in lands beyond their own shores. The geographical as well as the chronological ambits over which the subject extends are so vast that it is impossible to do justice to it even in a book of this size. In the space of some 1,036 pages, Mr. Carrington relates the story of the British settlements overseas in America, Africa, Asia, and Australasia, beginning with 1344 when an Englishman named Macham sailed away with a woman he had stolen and discovered the island of Madiera, right upto 1949 when the British Empire was all but dissolved into separate autonomous though friendly units. Particular attention is given to "permanent settlements of the British in the empty lands of the temperate zones."

"To them I give a larger share of space than has been usual in books about the empire. Such interesting topics as the histories of French Canada, Dutch South Africa, and Moslem India are subsidiary to my theme; my concern is with the British Overseas, with pioneers and emigrants. Why and where did they go, and how did they behave in their new environments?"

Mr. Carrington has tried to be just and accurate in his narrative, but the reader cannot help feeling that the overall picture presented is the glorification of British activities in dark and uncivilised lands. The white man's burden is in evidence throughout the book. The ruthless extermination of the Red Indians in America is dismissed as a natural and inevitable incident in evolution. "Let Englishmen be proud" he says, "that their government attempted to protect and to civilise the savages; and let them not be surprised that they got no thanks from the settlers who lived under the threat of the Indian scalping-knives." Mr. Carrington accuses the Indian National Congress of sulking and bargaining during World War II and adds that the Viceroys of India "raised, trained and equipped and put into the field an army of 2,000,000, voluntary organisation, drawn from all parts of India, that actually outnumbered the Congress party in membership". How voluntary

this army was and what threats and inducements were offered to obtain recruits are sufficiently known both to those who raised this army and to those who witnessed the spectacle of unwilling youths being led to the recruiting booths on pain of duress or on promises of fantastic gains. The soldiers who came back home after the war were far more disillusioned and far more bitter against their white rulers than the members of the Congress party. Again it is wrong to say that Indian economic interests were not subordinated to British commercial requirements. Indigenous industries were discouraged and stifled except in so far as they benefited British commercial interests. The inevitable Black Hole of Calcutta also finds mention in the book and Mr. Carrington accepts Holwell's account of the incident, although it has been proved that many of the people who according to Holwell perished in Siraj--ud-Daula's guard house were alive many years later.

These errors and somewhat pardonable deviations from objective truth apart, the account is on the whole accurate and complete. The reader will find all the familiar names and incidents and some others which are not so familiar. The Botany Bay, Captain Bligh of the Bounty, the trial of Nuncomar by Elijah Impey, the story of Hudson Bay, the affair of Nootka Sound, Livingstone and Stanley, The Eureka Stockade, Tom Coryat's walk to India overland for a wager, Cecil Rhodes, Rudyard Kipling, indeed everything and everybody of any importance in the history of the British overseas finds mention in the book. It is a compendium of information upon all subjects connected with the British settlements overseas. As a reference book it is an excellent compilation. The narrative is a little disjointed and compressed, but this is inevitable when so much has to be told in the space of a thousand pages only. Yet the story is enlivened with intimate and personal touches. Here is an account written by Sir Thomas Munro when as a boy he joined the Madras army. "My dress grows tattered in one quarter whilst I am establishing funds to repair it in another, and my coat is in danger of losing the sleeves, while I am pulling it off. I have dined to-day on porridge made of half-ground flour and I shall most likely dine tomorrow on plantain fritters, this simplicity of fare being the effect of necessity, not of choice." Captain Cook who became known for his voyages "insisted on cleanliness, ventilation, daily exercise, variety in diet and on the use of a decoction of *sauerkraut* when no other fresh vegetables were available. He took great pains to keep his crews cheerful and encouraged dancing on the foc'sle. He was a naval not a medical reformer." Speaking of the ships used for the slave trade in the 18th century the author says "They built ships designed to carry the maximum load of slaves in the minimum deck-space, fitted them out for the 'Coast' but never saw them again until they returned empty from America to refit. The largest ships each carried about 700 slaves, who were occasionally let out in batches on the main deck for air and exercise, since it would not be profitable to let them die, but otherwise were shackled between decks with space to lie at full length but not to stand upright. 'The French, Portuguese and English slave ships', said a Dutch commercial rival, 'are always foul and stinking.' It was the

general saying at sea that you could recognise a slaver by the smell if you got to leeward of her. In all long voyages 200 years ago, sickness and mortality were to be expected. The death-rate on the 'Middle Passage' from Africa to America, explains the width of the margin between the buying and the selling price of slaves."

The reasons which impelled the British to travel abroad and settle in lands overseas were mainly four according to Mr. Carrington: (1) increase of population in England, (2) a desire for material gain, (3) search for religious toleration, and (4) the impulse to extend Christianity to other lands. Wars of conquest which enabled the British to annex a large empire were not deliberately planned as wars of conquest. They were merely incidental to the four causes enumerated above. British supremacy had its heyday from 1846 to 1931 and during this period it adopted five modes of expansion: (1) by settlement, (2) by trade, (3) by finance, (4) by conquest, and (5) by the spreading of ideas. The highest point reached, retrogression began and the disintegration of the Empire followed. There is a touch of pathos in the concluding reflections of Mr. Carrington as he looks back at the achievements of an Empire that is no more. Every Englishman will read this book with a glow of pride and every non-Englishman will feel that the book is written in a spirit of dull smugness.

The book is illustrated and has a number of useful maps. It has a good index but unfortunately there is no bibliography for the student desirous of pursuing the story further.

G. D. Khosla

Britain and the Dominions by W. R. Brock (*British Commonwealth Series*. BK. I, Cambridge University Press, 1951; pp. xxii+522, 47 plates, 30 maps and 18 diagrams).

IN this very compact, readable and well-produced volume, the first to be issued in the recently started *British Commonwealth Series*, the author presents a lucid survey of the significant forces and circumstances that have made possible the emergence of one of the most remarkable political organisations known to history—the Commonwealth of Nations. He has not restricted himself to the mere recounting of political or military events, but has rightly sought to present his survey as the story of the growth of a unique concept, the concept of regional freedom combined with external peace, of independence combined with a recognition of international obligations, of decentralisation combined with unity of purpose and action. The emergence of this concept is the outcome of many conflicting forces, and it has been the author's task to analyse them, to study them historically and to explain the processes by which the conflicts have ultimately been resolved.

The study begins with an introductory narrative dwelling chiefly on early colonial history and the ideas and doctrines which dominated and to a large extent moulded the colonial policy of Britain till her narrow imperialism involved her in a deadly conflict with her colonies in America. The loss of the colonies led to a re-orientation of British policy, the final abandonment of the mercantilist theory and the gradual adoption of the principle of free and unrestricted trade. The outcome was made possible mainly by the agrarian and mechanical revolutions which enabled British industry to become the most productive in the world. The colonies under the new system, were to stand on their own feet, and although many in England feared that this would lead to the ultimate liquidation of the Empire, the situation was more than saved by the innate faith of the colonies themselves in the glory of the British political tradition, which continued to serve as a stronger bond of union than the legal restrictions imposed under the discarded system.

The third epoch in British imperial history was ushered in by the winning of responsible government by Canada, and ended with the emergence of the Union of South Africa. Revolutionary improvements in communications served further to strengthen, during the epoch, the bond that held together the components of the Empire and made possible the growth of a new faith in imperial unity which was further nourished by the doctrines of New Imperialism made popular by Disraeli and Chamberlain. The close of the epoch saw the birth of a new idea—'the idea of common action without centralisation, of a single purpose without a single government, of association without subjection'.

The soundness and innate strength of the new idea has been severely tested in the present century, which, according to the author, forms the fourth epoch in the history of the Empire. During this phase the Empire has been subjected to the strain of two world wars, and despite the economic disasters that have followed in their wake the imperial ties today seem to be stronger than at any previous time. Though the legal bonds have loosened, actual co-operation between the member states is on the increase. The term 'Empire' has dropped out of use, yielding place to the happier expression, 'Commonwealth of Nations'. What the author finds most encouraging is the fact that three non-British States, India, Pakistan and Ceylon, have become members of the Commonwealth, and he confidently believes the way to be open for other countries in the Empire including the very backward ones to rise to the status of full fledged membership of the Commonwealth.

The thoughts and reflections embedded in this brilliant survey are dominated by a burning faith in the glorious future of the Commonwealth and the Commonwealth ideal. This optimism perhaps owes its origin to the author's preoccupation with the moral and spiritual factors helping the growth of the Empire to the apparent exclusion of all others. He appears to ignore, for instance, the glaring fact that geographically the components of the Empire are isolated from each other and that Britain no longer commands the sea. Her capacity to protect her sister-states depends today to a large extent on

the nature of her understanding with U.S.A. and the author does not indicate if the Commonwealth will be able to bear the strain of a possible misunderstanding with the latter country.

The author believes in the possibility of the backward races within the Empire rising to a status of equal partnership with the rest, but he says little or nothing as to how this miracle is going to be achieved. Examples of India or Ceylon are hardly likely to be of any help here, for both these countries have had a rich and glorious history of their own. But the world is yet to witness the rise of a Hottentot or a Zulu republic sharing with Canada and Australia the rich tradition of the Commonwealth and holding its own against the rest of the world.

These omissions, however, do not detract from the value of the book, which is, on the whole, a very satisfactory account of a unique political experiment known to the historian. It can safely be recommended to the student interested in political science and comparative history.

S. Roy

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